Slavery in the United States

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Slavery in the United States was the legal institution of human chattel slavery that existed in the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries after it gained independence and before the end of the American Civil War. Slavery had been introduced and practiced by the British Empire in North America from early colonial days, and was practiced in all the Thirteen Colonies at the time of the United States Declaration of Independence in 1776. After the United States gained its independence, states in the Northern United States, motivated by the ideals of the American Revolution, outlawed the practice of slavery, whereas states in the Southern United States continued it. As a result, the existence of slavery grew to become a major political issue in the United States throughout its practice, being contested by those who desired to end it, such as abolitionists and the Republicans, and those who desired to maintain it, such as the Democrats. In 1860, the anti-slavery candidate Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 United States presidential election. Several slave-holding states, unwilling to live under an anti-slavery leader, declared that they were leaving the U.S. as a result. The U.S. refused to recognize their claims and American Civil War erupted, after four years of which, the rebelling Confederate States of America surrendered and the institution was outlawed under the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

Slavery was bound to continue, with the constitution or without it. If liberty *for anyone* was to have a future in America, the indispensable first step was a stronger national government on a democratic basis. ~ Thomas G. West

Arranged alphabetically by author or source:
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Quotes

A

- Every measure of prudence, therefore, ought to be assumed for **the eventual total extirpation of slavery** from the United States...
  - John Adams, letter to Robert J. Evans (http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2127#lf1431-10_head_152) (8 June 1819).

- I shudder when I think of **the calamities which slavery is likely to produce in this country.** You would think me mad if I were to describe my anticipations...
  - John Adams (1820), as quoted in *John Adams* (https://web.archive.org/web/20111029143754/http://home.nas.com/lopresti/ps2.htm) (1962), by Page Smith, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, p. 138.
- **Slavery in this country, I have seen hanging over it like a black cloud for half a century**...
  - John Adams (1821), as quoted in *Passionate Sage* (https://web.archive.org/web/20111029143754/http://home.nas.com/lopresti/ps2.htm) (1993), Joseph J. Ellis, New York: Norton, p. 138.
- Slavery must have differed in details in one country from that in another, but after all, it was shameful in Brazil, shameful in the United States, just as it is shameful at any other spot underneath the blue sky.
  - Herbert B. Alexander, *Brazilian and United States Slavery Compared* (1922)
- I did more for the Russian serf in giving him land as well as personal liberty, than America did for the negro slave set free by the proclamation of President Lincoln. I am at a loss to understand how you Americans could have been so blind as to leave the negro slave without tools to work out his salvation. In giving him personal liberty, you have him an obligation to perform to the state which he must be unable to fulfill. Without property of any kind he cannot educate himself and his children. I believe the time must come when many will question the manner of American emancipation of the negro slaves in 1863. The vote, in the hands of an ignorant man, without either property or self respect, will be used to the damage of the people at large; for the rich man, without honor or any kind of patriotism, will purchase it, and with it swamp the rights of a free people.
  - Alexander II, emperor of Russia, conversation with Wharton Barker, Pavlovski Palace (17 August 1879); reported in Barker, "The Secret of Russia's Friendship", *The Independent* (March 24, 1904), p. 647.
- So the reason there were so few slave rebellions in the United States wasn't because African slaves were actually content, as racist whites contended, or even because of brutal repression. It had to do with human nature and effective management technique. Another reason why there were so few slave rebellions was that until the 1800s, there wasn't even a context to frame a slave uprising. Until then, a slave insurrection was seen as an act of random evil or sheer insanity by the ruling class. So if the insurrection failed, it would have no resonance, politically, culturally, or otherwise. Slave uprisings weren't framed by the ruling whites as an inevitable consequence of slavery, but rather as random acts of violence by sick, ungrateful Africans. Until the 1800s, it was difficult, if not impossible, for Americans to even imagine why a slave would rebel. As historian Louis Filler wrote in *The Crusade Against Slavery*, "Throughout the colonial period and after the American Revolution, slavery was accepted by most Americans as a normal and inevitable aspect of their affairs." They knew and feared that slaves might rebel, but they couldn't understand why, except that there was something inherently barbarous (and ungrateful) in the Africans' nature- there were a few bad apples out there. The effective propaganda of the time said that the white man was dong a great humanitarian deed for his African slaves: civilizing them, giving them clothes and comforts that they would be denied in Africa, and teaching them the word of Christ, thereby saving their souls and giving them a chance to win a spot in Heaven. What crazy fool could argue with that logic? What kind of madman would take up arms against this?
  - Mark Ames, *Going Postal: Rage, Murder and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond* (2005), p. 41-42
- Today, the inherent injustice of slavery is obvious to everyone, but this was not the case when the Declaration of Independence was composed. More devastating was the fact that radical abolitionism, which today we accept as the only sane view on slavery, was at the time ignored and pushed into the "wacko" margins along with all the other crank ideas of the time. This is how it always works with new and dangerous truths that confront injustice... The point is that real-time injustice, even of the most epic sort, is often simply not recognized as such

at the time, no matter how obvious the injustice later appears. Man is hard wired to submit (adapt) to any condition and then consider it normal. Our acceptance of injustice is reinforced by the going ideology. With African slaves in America, it was Christianity that helped convince them and the white population that slavery was God's work. Well-funded, sophisticated, and multidimensional PR campaigns have always been employed to sway the general public to accept even the most counterintuitive policies, convincing people that such policies work in their own interests, and are inevitable and morally good.

  - Mark Ames, *Going Postal: Rage, Murder and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond* (2005), p. 43

- A plot by slaves to march on Richmond, Virginia, in 1800, the so-called Gabriel Uprising named after its lead slave, was described by then-governor James Monroe as "strange" and blamed on the French Revolution and the Hispaniola slave uprising from a few years earlier. In other words, the future president and creator of the Monroe Doctrine, which vowed to fight against outsiders trying to meddle in our hemisphere, suddenly found these outsiders useful to explain slave unrest in his own state. Blaming the French Revolution and the slave rebellion in Hispaniola is Monroe's version of blaming Marilyn Manson and violent video games. The Gabriel Uprising was finally "put down" when twenty-seven slaves were publicly hanged. The awful truth about the Gabriel Uprising is that no one even knows if a real plot existed. In fact, it probably didn't. But fear of an uprising was real, particularly among a population that refused to face the real cause. Indeed, the intense fear of insurrection seems to match the intensity of the collective denial about its cause. This is reminiscent of the countless school shooting plots "uncovered" over the past few years.

  - Mark Ames, *Going Postal: Rage, Murder and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond* (2005), p. 46

- Much like today's mainstream rush to blame Hollywood, the NRA, or other fuzzy outsiders for causing rage massacres that occur in offices and schoolyards, Americans, particularly Southerners right up to the late 1850s, blamed any slave unrest or rebellion on "outside agitators," whether on Northern abolitionist unrest or alien Jacobins. And they sincerely believed it. They couldn't even imagine that domestic conditions, that the very institution of slavery, caused slaves to rebel. It didn't make sense to them and those who suggested such a thing simply "didn't understand." To suggest that slavery as an institution and the South's culture caused black insurrection and violence was dangerous lunacy; an abolitionist was as shunned and marginalized as today's Earth Liberation Front activists. Indeed, as Harding notes, white Northern abolitionists, as late as the 1830s, were a "despised minority... [marked by] deep divisions among themselves. That's Northern abolitionists, not Southern abolitionists.

  - Mark Ames, *Going Postal: Rage, Murder and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond* (2005), p. 46

- Anything, no matter how bizarre, was cited as the cause for slave rebellions except for the most obvious source: slavery.

  - Mark Ames, *Going Postal: Rage, Murder and Rebellion: From Reagan's Workplaces to Clinton's Columbine and Beyond* (2005), p. 50

B

- Juneteenth marks both the long, hard night of slavery and subjugation, and a promise of a brighter morning to come. This is a day of profound — in my view — profound weight and profound power. A day in which we remember the moral stain, the terrible toll that slavery took on the country and continues to take — what I've long called "America's original sin." At the same time, I also remember the extraordinary capacity to heal, and to hope, and to emerge from the most painful moments and a bitter, bitter version of ourselves, but to make a better version of ourselves. You know, today, we consecrate Juneteenth for what it ought to be, what it must be: a national holiday.

  - Joe Biden, Remarks by President Biden at Signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, WH.gov (https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/06/17/remarks-by-president-biden-at-signing-of-the-juneteenth-national-independence-day-act/) June 17, 2021

- On June 19, 1865 — nearly nine decades after our Nation's founding, and more than 2 years after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation — enslaved Americans in Galveston, Texas, finally received word that they were free from bondage. As those who were formerly enslaved were recognized for the first time as citizens, Black Americans came to commemorate Juneteenth with celebrations across the country, building new lives and a new tradition that we honor today. In its celebration of freedom, Juneteenth is a day that should be recognized by all Americans. And that is why I am proud to have consecrated Juneteenth as our newest national holiday...
  I call upon the people of the United States to acknowledge and celebrate the end of the Civil War and the emancipation of Black Americans, and commit together to eradicate systemic racism that still undermines our founding ideals and collective prosperity.
  - Joe Biden, Proclamation on Juneteenth Day of Observance 2021, WH.gov (https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/18/a-proclamation-on-juneteenth-day-of-observance-2021/), June 18, 2021

This country was formed for the white, not for the black man. And, looking upon African slavery from the same stand-point held by the noble framers of our constitution, I, for one, have ever considered if one of the greatest blessings, both for themselves and us, that God has ever bestowed upon a favored nation. ~ John Wilkes Booth

- In a dissent on Friday, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote: "This is a brazen challenge to our federal structure. It echoes the philosophy of John C. Calhoun, a virulent defender of the slaveholding South who insisted that States had the right to 'veto' or 'nullif[y]' any federal law with which they disagreed."
  I found the invocation of South Carolina's Calhoun striking. Yes, he was a strong believer in nullification, the idea that states could nullify federal laws, but he was also a raging racist who went further than the slave owners who saw slavery as a "necessary evil," seeing it instead as a positive good.
  In 1837, Calhoun railed in a speech on the Senate floor that slavery had "grown up with our society and institutions and is so interwoven with them that to destroy it would be to destroy us as a people."
  He continued:
  But let me not be understood as admitting, even by implication, that the existing relations between the two races in the slaveholding states is an evil: Far otherwise; I hold it to be a good, as it has thus far proved itself to be to both and will continue to prove so if not disturbed by the fell spirit of abolition. I appeal to facts. Never before has the Black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically but morally and intellectually.
  He would reiterate that slavery was, "instead of an evil, a good — a positive good."
  In fact, Calhoun's stance on slavery and states' rights was so severe that he has been called the father of secession and the man who started the Civil War, even though he died 11 years before the war commenced.
  In Calhoun's view, the states had the right to control and oppress Black bodies as they saw fit, regardless of any actions to the contrary on the federal level. States, he felt, should be able to choose whether or not they wanted slavery.
  - Charles M. Blow, "We're Edging Closer to Civil War" (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/opinion/abortion-rights-america.html), *The New York Times*, (Dec. 12, 2021)

- This country was formed for the white, not for the black man. And, looking upon African slavery from the same stand-point held by the noble framers of our constitution, I, for one, have ever considered if one of the greatest blessings, both for themselves and us, that God has ever bestowed upon a favored nation. Witness, heretofore, our wealth and power; witness their elevation and enlightenment above their race elsewhere. I have lived among it most of my life, and have seen less harsh treatment from master to man than I have beheld in the North from father to son. Yet, Heaven knows, no one would be willing to do more for the negro race than I, could I but see a way to still better their

condition. But Lincoln's policy is only preparing the way for their total annihilation. The South are not, nor have they been, fighting for the continuance of slavery. The first battle of Bull Run did away with that idea. Their causes since for war have been as noble and greater far than those that urged our fathers on Even should we allow they were wrong at the beginning of this contest, cruelty and injustice have made the wrong become the right, and they stand now before the wonder and admiration of the world as a noble band of patriotic heroes. Hereafter, reading of their deeds, Thermopylae will be forgotten.

  - John Wilkes Booth, (14 April 1865), letter to the *National Intelligencer*, prior to his assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

- One of the ironies of the American slave system was that it depended for its survival on a federal structure that left it vulnerable and unstable. Within the federal union, the slave-dependent states had access to a national market in which they could sell the products of slave labor to merchants and manufacturers throughout the country. They could also buy and sell enslaved people, as part of a lucrative internal trade in human beings. Entitled to representation under the supreme charter of the federal union, slave owners could accumulate political power that they could deploy to defend and extend their interests. They could use their considerable influence to shape foreign and domestic policy.
  And because the states had considerable latitude over their internal affairs, the leaders of slave-dependent states could shape their communities to their own satisfaction, especially with regard to slavery. They could, without any objection from the federal government, declare all Black people within their borders to be presumptively enslaved — and that is, in fact, what they did.

  - Jamelle Bouie, "What the Contradiction of Slavery Tells Us About Abortion Rights" (https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/02/opinion/slavery-abortion-rights-laws.html), *New York Times*, (Sept. 2, 2023)

- But the federal union wasn't perfect for slaveholders. There were problems. Complications. Free-state leaders also had considerable latitude over their internal affairs. They could, for example, declare enslaved Black people free once they entered. And while leaders in many free states were unhappy about the extent of their free Black populations — in 1807, as the historian Kate Masur tells us in "Until Justice Be Done: America's First Civil Rights Movement, From the Revolution to Reconstruction," Ohio lawmakers passed a law requiring free Black migrants to register with the county clerk and have at least two white property owners vouch for their ability to support themselves — they ultimately could not stop the significant growth of free Black communities within their borders, whose members could (and would) agitate against slavery.
  The upshot of all of this was that, until the Supreme Court's decision in Dred Scott v. Sandford settled the matter in favor of slaveholders, the status of an enslaved Black person outside a slave state was uncertain. It was unclear whether property in man extended beyond the borders of states where it was authorized by law.
  It was also unclear whether a slave state's authority over an enslaved Black person persisted beyond its borders. And on those occasions when a free Black person was within the reach of slave-state law — as was true when free Black sailors arrived in Southern ports — it was unclear if they were subject primarily to the laws of their home states or the laws of the slave states. South Carolina assumed the latter, for example, when it passed a law in 1822 requiring that all "free Negroes or persons of color" arriving in the state by water be placed in jail until their scheduled departure.
  One would have to conclude, surveying the legal landscape of slavery before Dred Scott, that federalism could not handle a question as fundamental as human bondage. The tensions, contradictions and conflicts between states were simply too great.

  - Jamelle Bouie, "What the Contradiction of Slavery Tells Us About Abortion Rights" (https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/02/opinion/slavery-abortion-rights-laws.html), *New York Times*, (Sept. 2, 2023)

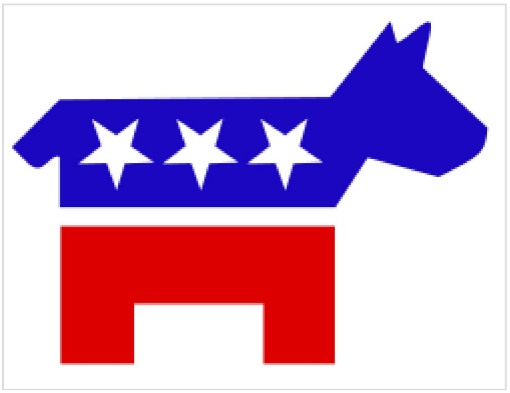
- Slavery, throughout its entire existence in the United States, is none other than the most barbarous, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of one portion of its citizens against another portion, the only conditions of which are perpetual imprisonment and hopeless servitude, or absolute extermination, in utter disregard and violation of those eternal and self-evident truths set forth in our Declaration of Independence.

  - John Brown, as quoted in "Provisional Constitution and Ordinances" (http://web.archive.org/web/20110421025226/http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/johnbrown/brownconstitution.html) (1858).

- I, John Brown, am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land can never be purged away but with blood. I had as I now think, vainly flattered myself that without very much bloodshed, it might be done.
  - John Brown, as quoted in a note that he had at his execution (2 December 1859), most sources say it was handed to the guard, but some dispute that and claim it was handed to a reporter accompaning him; as quoted in *John Brown and his Men* (1894) by Richard Josiah Hinton.
- This is a beautiful country.
  - John Brown, last words (2 December 1859), as quoted in *John Brown and his Men* (https://books.google.com/books?id=uiaYWp66b-cC&pg=PR1&dq=John+Brown+and+his+Men+%281894%29+by+Richard+Josiah+Hinton&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Uub_VN3CN5HbggTdxIK4Cw&ved=0CB4Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=John%20Brown%20and%20his%20Men%20(1894)%20by%20Richard%20Josiah%20Hinton&f=false) (1894) by Richard Josiah Hinton, p. 397.

C

- Many in the south once believed that slavery was a moral and political evil. That folly and delusion are gone. We see it now in its true light, and regard it as the most safe and stable basis for free institutions in the world.
  - John C. Calhoun, regarding slavery (1838), as quoted in *Time-Life Books The Civil War*, vol. 1 (Brother Against Brother), Time Inc, New York (1983).
- This country was founded by slave owners who wanted to be free.
  - George Carlin, as quoted in *What Am I Doing in New Jersey?* (1988).
- The prevailing Notion now is to Continue the most abject State of Slavery in this Common-Wealth...
  - Robert Carter III, letter to James Manning (http://www.brown.edu/Administration/News_Bureau/Databases/Encyclopedia/search.php?serial=M0100) (1786).



The Democratic Party then, as now, was in open alliance with slavery, in a conspiracy against the Constitution and the peace of the country. ~ George William Curtis

- This increasing unification has well-nigh obliterated State lines so far as concerns many relations of life. Yet, in a country of such enormous expanse, there must always be certain regional differences in social outlook and economic thought. The most familiar illustration of this is found in the history of slavery. The Constitution did not interfere with slavery, except to fix a time when the foreign slave trade should be abolished. Yet within a generation the country was confronting a sharp sectional division on this issue. **Changing economic conditions made slavery profitable in the south, but left it unprofitable in the north. The resulting war might have been avoided if the south had adopted a policy of ultimate abolition.** But as this method was not pursued the differences grew sharper until they brought on the great conflict.
  - Calvin Coolidge, "The Reign of Law" (https://archive.org/stream/foundationsofrep00unit/foundationsofrep00unit_djvu.txt) (30 May 1925), speech at the Memorial Exercises, Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington County, Virginia.
- **There was not in all the colonial legislation of America one single law which recognized the rightfulness of slavery in the abstract; that in 1774 Virginia stigmatized the slave-trade as 'wicked, cruel, and unnatural'; that in the same year Congress protested against it 'under the sacred ties of virtue, honor, and love of country';** that in 1775 the same Congress denied that God intended one man to own

another as a slave; that the new Discipline of the Methodist Church, in 1784, and the Pastoral Letter of the Presbyterian Church, in 1788, denounced slavery; that abolition societies existed in slave States, and that it was hardly the interest even of the cotton-growing States, where it took a slave a day to clean a pound of cotton, to uphold the system... Jefferson, in his address to the Virginia Legislature of 1774, says that 'the abolition of domestic slavery is the greatest object of desire in these colonies, where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state'; and while he constantly remembers to remind us that the Jeffersonian prohibition of slavery in the territories was lost in 1784, he forgets to add that it was lost, not by a majority of votes — for there were sixteen in its favor to seven against it — but because the sixteen votes did not represent two thirds of the States; and he also incessantly forgets to tell us that this Jeffersonian prohibition was restored by the Congress of 1785, and erected into the famous Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which was re-enacted by the first Congress of the United States and approved by the first President.

  - George William Curtis, "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" (https://archive.org/details/orationsandaddr03curtgoog) (18 October 1859), New York City.

- The Democratic Party then, as now, was in open alliance with slavery, in a conspiracy against the Constitution and the peace of the country.

  - George William Curtis, as quoted in "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" (https://archive.org/details/orationsandaddr03curtgoog) (18 October 1859), New York City.

- If Washington or Jefferson or Madison should utter upon his native soil today the opinions he entertained and expressed upon this question, he would be denounced as a fanatical abolitionist. To declare the right of all men to liberty is sectional, because slavery is afraid of liberty and strikes the mouth that speaks the word. To preach slavery is not sectional — no: because freedom respects itself and believes in itself enough to give an enemy fair play. Thus Boston asked Senator Toombs to come and say what he could for slavery. I think Boston did a good thing, but I think Senator Toombs is not a wise man, for he went. He went all the way from Georgia to show Massachusetts how slavery looks, and to let it learn what it has to say. When will Georgia ask Wendell Phillips or Charles Sumner to come down and show her how liberty looks and speaks?

  - George William Curtis, as quoted in "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" (https://archive.org/details/orationsandaddr03curtgoog) (18 October 1859), New York City.

- I confess I secretly suspect the Republicanism of an orator who is more anxious to show his hearers that he respects what he calls the rights of slavery than that he loves the rights of man. If God be just and the human instinct true, slavery has no rights at all. It has only a legalized toleration. Have I a right to catch a weaker man than I, and appropriate him, his industry, and his family, forever, against his will, to my service? Because if I have, any man stronger than I has the same right over me. But if I have not, what possible right is represented by the two thousand million dollars of property in human beings in this country? It is the right of Captain Kidd on the sea, of Dick Turpin on the land. I certainly do not say that every slave-holder is a bad man, because I know the contrary. The complicity of many with the system is inherited, and often unwilling. But to rob a man of his liberty, to make him so far as possible a brute and a thing, is not less a crime against human nature because it is organized into a hereditary system of frightful proportions. A wrong does not become a right by being vested.

  - George William Curtis, as quoted in "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" (https://archive.org/details/orationsandaddr03curtgoog) (18 October 1859), New York City.

- As to the doctrine of slavery and the right of Christians to hold Africans in perpetual servitude, and sell and treat them as we do our horses and cattle, that, it is true, has been heretofore countenanced by the Province Laws formerly, but nowhere is it expressly enacted or established. It has been a usage, a usage which took its origin from the practice of some of the European nations, and the regulations of British government respecting the then-colonies, for the benefit of trade and wealth. But whatever sentiments have formerly prevailed in this particular or slid in upon us by the example of others, **a different idea has taken place with the people of America, more favorable to the natural rights of mankind, and to that natural, innate desire of liberty, with which Heaven, without regard to color, complexion, or shape of noses-**

features, has inspired all the human race. And upon this ground our constitution of government, by which the people of this Commonwealth have solemnly bound themselves, sets out with declaring that all men are born free and equal, and that every subject is entitled to liberty, and to have it guarded by the laws, as well as life and property, and in short is totally repugnant to the idea of being born slaves. This being the case, I think the idea of slavery is inconsistent with our own conduct and constitution; and there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational creature, unless his liberty is forfeited by some criminal conduct or given up by personal consent or contract.

- William Cushing, as quoted in *Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Jennison* (https://web.archive.org/web/20040128112051/http://www.slavenorth.com/massemancip.htm) (1783).

D

- In this current age of globalization, which has expanded our comprehension of earlier international connections and dependencies, American slavery can no longer be understood in parochial terms or simply as a chapter in the history of the U.S. South. The peoples of West Africa, as well as those of every maritime nation in western Europe and every colony in the New World, played a part in the creation of the world's first system of multinational production for what emerged as a mass market—a market for slave-produced sugar, tobacco, coffee, chocolate, dye-stuffs, rice, hemp, and cotton. For four centuries, beginning in the 1400s with Iberian plantation agriculture in the Atlantic sugar islands off the African coast, the African slave trade was an integral and indispensable part of European expansion and the settlement of the Americas. The demand for labor was especially acute in the tropical and semitropical zones that produced the staples and thus the wealth most desired by Europeans. By the mid-1700s the value of exports to Britain from the British West Indies was more than ten times that of exports from colonies north of Virginia and Maryland. And the economy of the Northern colonies depended in large part on Caribbean markets, which depended in turn on the continuing importation of African labor to replenish an oppressed population that could not sustain itself by natural increase.

  - David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the Americas* (2006)

The way to abolish slavery in America is to vote such men into power as well use their powers for the abolition of slavery. ~ Frederick Douglass

- [A]lways there had been the complicated factor of the one institution that peculiarly set the South apart from the North, slavery... **Southern states had embraced the Union only insofar as it served to protect their rights to hold property in slaves**, and to spread slavery as the nation expanded and the institution itself became intertwined as a defining element in the struggle for national power itself. In slavery could not spread as new states were formed, then the existing slave states would be doomed to perpetual minority in representation in Congress, guaranteeing that if the day came when Northern antipathy to slavery itself became hot enough, the majority could use the government to subvert the Constitution and abolish the institution where it already existed. **In short, the South could not affort to lose any battle over slavery, nor even over issues on its periphery**.

  - William Davis, *Look Away!: A History of the Confederate States of America* (https://books.google.com/books?id=KSd0SkDXtJQC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q=slavery&f=false) (2002), New York: The Free Press, p. 3

- "What we had in the years leading up to the Civil War was a failure of what lawyers call comity, the idea that states will respect other states' laws" for reasons of courtesy, consideration and mutual respect, said Ariela J. Gross, a professor of law and history at the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. "That starts to break down when you have these really stark differences over an issue involving a fundamental right, and that's what happened in the years leading up to the Civil War."

After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, federal statutes required Northern states to assist Southern slave owners and their bounty hunters in capturing enslaved people who had escaped north to states that had banned slavery. But many Northern states passed laws to impede cooperation and enforcement.

  - Ken Dilanian, "There's another War Between the States coming over abortion" (https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/supreme-court/another-war-states-coming-abortion-rcna35566), *NBCNews*, (June 27, 2022)

- Resolved, That we reiterate with renewed energy of purpose the well considered declarations of former Conventions upon the sectional issue of Domestic slavery, and concerning the reserved rights of the States. 1. That Congress has no power under the Constitution, to interfere with or control the domestic institutions of the several States, and that such States are the sole and proper judges of everything appertaining to their own affairs, not prohibited by the Constitution; that all efforts of the abolitionists, or others, made to induce Congress to interfere with questions of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences; and that all such efforts have an inevitable tendency to diminish the happiness of the people and endanger the stability and permanency of the Union, and ought not to be countenanced by any friend of our political institutions. 2. That the foregoing proposition covers, and was intended to embrace the whole subject of slavery agitation in Congress; and therefore, the Democratic party of the Union, standing on this national platform, will abide by and adhere to a faithful execution of the acts known as the compromise measures, settled by the Congress of 1850; "the act for reclaiming fugitives from service or labor," included; which act being designed to carry out an express provision of the Constitution, cannot, with fidelity thereto, be repealed, or so changed as to destroy or impair its efficiency. 3. That the Democratic party will resist all attempts at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made. 4. That the Democratic party will faithfully abide by and uphold, the principles laid down in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 1798, and in the report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799; that it adopts those principles as constituting one of the main foundations of its political creed, and is resolved to carry them out in their obvious meaning and import. And that we may more distinctly meet the issue on which a sectional party, subsisting exclusively on slavery agitation, now relies to test the fidelity of the people, North and South, to the Constitution and the Union—
- **In thinking of America, I sometimes find myself admiring her bright blue sky — her grand old woods — her fertile fields — her beautiful rivers — her mighty lakes, and star-crowned mountains. But my rapture is soon checked, my joy is soon turned to mourning.** When I remember that all is cursed with the infernal spirit of slaveholding, robbery and wrong, — when I remember that with the waters of her noblest rivers, the tears of my brethren are borne to the ocean, disregarded and forgotten, and that her most fertile fields drink daily of the warm blood of my outraged sisters, I am filled with unutterable loathing.
  - Frederick Douglass, letter to William Lloyd Garrison (http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/1091.htm) (1 January 1846).
- What a world of inconsistency, as well as of wickedness, is suggested by the smooth and gliding phrase, AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE; and how strange and perverse is that moral sentiment which loathes, execrates, and brands as piracy and as deserving of death the carrying away into captivity men, women, and children from the *African coast*; but which is neither shocked nor disturbed by a similar traffic, carried on with the same motives and purposes, and characterized by even *more* odious peculiarities on the coast of our MODEL REPUBLIC. We execrate and hang the wretch guilty of this crime on the coast of Guinea, while we respect and applaud the guilty participators in this murderous business on enlightened shores of the Chesapeake. The inconsistency is so flagrant and glaring, that it would seem to cast a doubt on the doctrine of the innate moral sense of mankind.
  - Frederick Douglass, *The Heroic Slave*, published in *Autographs for Freedom*, edited by Julia Griffiths, Cleveland: John P. Jewett & Company, 1853
- The way to abolish slavery in America is to vote such men into power as well use their powers for the abolition of slavery.

- Frederick Douglass, *The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?* (http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-constitution-of-the-united-states-is-it-pro-slavery-or-anti-slavery/) (26 March 1860), by F. Douglass. Glasgow, United Kingdom.

- **My argument against the dissolution of the American Union is this. It would place the slave system more exclusively under the control of the slave-holding states, and withdraw it from the power in the northern states which is opposed to slavery. Slavery is essentially barbarous in its character. It, above all things else, dreads the presence of an advanced civilization. It flourishes best where it meets no reproving frowns, and hears no condemning voices. While in the Union it will meet with both. Its hope of life, in the last resort, is to get out of the Union. I am, therefore, for drawing the bond of the Union more completely under the power of the free states. What they most dread, that I most desire**. I have much confidence in the instincts of the slaveholders. They see that the Constitution will afford slavery no protection when it shall cease to be administered by slaveholders. They see, moreover, that if there is once a will in the people of America to abolish slavery, this is no word, no syllable in the Constitution to forbid that result. They see that the Constitution has not saved slavery in Rhode Island, in Connecticut, in New York, or Pennsylvania; that the Free States have only added three to their original number. There were twelve Slave States at the beginning of the Government: there are fifteen now.
  - Frederick Douglass, "The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?" (http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-constitution-of-the-united-states-is-it-pro-slavery-or-anti-slavery/) (26 March 1860), Glasgow, United Kingdom.

- - Frederick Douglass, *The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?* (http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-constitution-of-the-united-states-is-it-pro-slavery-or-anti-slavery/) (26 March 1860), by F. Douglass. Glasgow, United Kingdom.

- **Southern gentlemen who led in the late rebellion have not parted with their convictions at this point, any more than at any other. They want to be independent of the negro. They believed in slavery and they believe in it still. They believed in an aristocratic class, and they believe in it still**. Though they have lost slavery, one element essential to such a class, they still have two important conditions to the reconstruction of that class. They have intelligence, and they have land. Of these, the land is the more important. They cling to it with all the tenacity of a cherished superstition. They will neither sell to the negro, nor let the carpet-bagger have it in peace, but are determined to hold it for themselves and their children forever. They have not yet learned that when a principle is gone, the incident must go also; that what was wise and proper under slavery is foolish and mischievous in a state of general liberty; that the old bottles are worthless when the new wine has come; but they have found that land is a doubtful benefit, where there're no hands to till it.
  - Frederick Douglass, *Our Composite Nationality* (http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/our-composite-nationality/) (7 December 1869), by F. Douglass, Boston, Massachusetts.

- Slavery was the wickedest thing in the world, the greatest curse the earth had ever felt... The sin of slavery is so clearly written out, and so much talked against, that if any one says he don't know, and has not heard, he must, I think, be a liar.
  - John Dumont (1849), a former slaveholder and former master of Sojourner Truth. As quoted in Olive Gilbert & Sojourner Truth (1878), Narrative of Sojourner Truth, a Bondswoman of Olden Time, page 124

E

- Slavery is not the only story about black people. It's only a small story! Don't they know if tomorrow a slave ship arrived at Elmina to carry us to America, so many Ghanaians would climb on board that this ship would sink to the bed of the ocean from our weight?
  - Elolo, as quoted in *Searching for Zion, The Quest for Home in the African Diaspora* (https://books.google.com/books?id=vnnGAgAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover) (2013), by Emily Raboteau, Atlantic Monthly Press, p. 223.

F

- We warn the North, that every one of the leading Abolitionists is agitating the negro slavery question merely as a means to attain ulterior ends ... [they are] committed to Socialism and Communism, ... to no private property, no church, no law, no government, --- to free love, free lands, free women and free churches.
  - George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! or, Slaves Without Masters* (A. Morris, Richmond, Virginia, 1857) page 368
- Shortly before the 1860 election, Frederick Douglass offered a succinct summary of the dilemma confronting opponents of slavery like Lincoln, who worked within the political system rather than outside it. Abstractly, Douglass wrote, most northerners would agree that slavery was wrong. The challenge was to find a way of 'translating antislavery sentiment into antislavery action'. The constitution barred interference with slavery in the states where it already existed. **For Lincoln, as for most Republicans, antislavery action meant not attacking slavery where it was but working to prevent slavery's westward expansion. Lincoln, however, did talk about a future without slavery. The aim of the Republican Party, he insisted, was to put the institution on the road to 'ultimate extinction'**, a phrase he borrowed from Henry Clay. Ultimate extinction could take a long time. Lincoln once said that slavery might survive for another hundred years. But to the south, Lincoln seemed as dangerous as an abolitionist, because he was committed to the eventual end of slavery. This was why his election in 1860 led inexorably to secession and civil war.
  - Eric Foner, "Our Lincoln" (https://web.archive.org/web/20090219000715/http://ericfoner.com/articles/012609nation.html) (26 January 2009), *The Nation*

G

- Human slavery... The Democratic Party taught that it was divine; God's institution. They defended it, they stood around it, they followed it to its grave as a mourner. **But here it lies, dead by the hand of Abraham Lincoln; dead by the power of the Republican Party, dead by the justice of Almighty God**...
  - James A. Garfield, "Don't Pitch Your Tent Among the Dead" (http://grandoldpartisan.typepad.com/blog/2015/10/garfield-speech.html) (October 1879)
- The sin of slavery is one of which it may be said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission.
  - James A. Garfield, diary entry (8 June 1881).

The sin of slavery is one of which it may be said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. ~ James A. Garfield

- The will of the nation, speaking with the voice of battle and through the amended Constitution, has fulfilled the great promise of 1776 by proclaiming 'liberty throughout the land to all the inhabitants thereof.' **The elevation of the negro race from slavery to the full rights of citizenship is the most important political change we have known since the adoption of the Constitution of 1787. NO thoughtful man can fail to appreciate its beneficent effect upon our institutions and people.** It has freed us from the perpetual danger of war and dissolution. It has added immensely to the moral and industrial forces of our people. It has liberated the master as well as the slave from a relation which wronged and enfeebled both. It has surrendered to their own guardianship the manhood of more than 5,000,000 people, and has opened to each one of them a career of freedom and usefulness... No doubt this great change has caused serious disturbance to our Southern communities. This is to be deplored, though it was perhaps unavoidable. But those who resisted the change should remember that

under our institutions there was no middle ground for the negro race between slavery and equal citizenship. **There can be no permanent disfranchised peasantry in the United States. Freedom can never yield its fullness of blessings so long as the law or its administration places the smallest obstacle in the pathway of any virtuous citizen... The emancipated race has already made remarkable progress. With unquestioning devotion to the Union, with a patience and gentleness not born of fear, they have "followed the light as God gave them to see the light."** They are rapidly laying the material foundations of self-support, widening their circle of intelligence, and beginning to enjoy the blessings that gather around the homes of the industrious poor. They deserve the generous encouragement of all good men. So far as my authority can lawfully extend they shall enjoy the full and equal protection of the Constitution and the laws.

- James A. Garfield, Inaugural address (http://web.archive.org/web/20000523111834/http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/presiden/inaug/garfield.htm) (March 4, 1881).

There will be people who will not be consoled for the loss of a cause which they believed to be holy. As time passes, people, even of the South, will begin to wonder how it was possible that their ancestors ever fought for or justified institutions which acknowledged the right of property in man. ~ Ulysses S. Grant

- **I will say, finally, that I despair of the republic while slavery exists therein.** If I look up to God for success, no smile of mercy or forgiveness dispels the gloom of futurity; if to our own resources, they are daily diminishing; if to all history, our destruction is not only possible, but almost certain. Why should we slumber at this momentous crisis? If our hearts were dead to every throb of humanity; if it were lawful to oppress, where power is ample; still, if we had any regard for our safety and happiness, we should strive to crush the Vampire which is feeding upon our life-blood. All the selfishness of our nature cries aloud for a better security. Our own vices are too strong for us, and keep us in perpetual alarm; how, in addition to these, shall we be able to contend successfully with millions of armed and desperate men, as we must eventually, if slavery do not cease?
  - William Lloyd Garrison, Address to the Colonization Society (http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=562) (4 July 1829).

- Black women's sexual subordination and forced pregnancies were foundational to slavery. If cotton was euphemistically king, Black women's wealth-maximizing forced reproduction was queen.
  Ending the forced sexual and reproductive servitude of Black girls and women was a critical part of the passage of the 13th and 14th Amendments. The overturning of Roe v. Wade reveals the Supreme Court's neglectful reading of the amendments that abolished slavery and guaranteed all people equal protection under the law. It means the erasure of Black women from the Constitution.
  Mandated, forced or compulsory pregnancy contravenes enumerated rights in the Constitution, namely the 13th Amendment's prohibition against involuntary servitude and protection of bodily autonomy, as well as the 14th Amendment's defense of privacy and freedom.
  This Supreme Court demonstrates a selective and opportunistic interpretation of the Constitution and legal history, which ignores the intent of the 13th and 14th Amendments, especially as related to Black women's bodily autonomy, liberty and privacy which extended beyond freeing them from labor in cotton fields to shielding them from rape and forced reproduction. The horrors inflicted on Black women during slavery, especially sexual violations and forced pregnancies, have been all but wiped from cultural and legal memory. Ultimately, this failure disserves all women.
  - Michelle Goodwin, "No, Justice Alito, Reproductive Justice Is in the Constitution" (https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/26/opinion/justice-alito-reproductive-justice-constitution-abortion.html?name=styln-op-abortion&region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&block=storyline_opinion_quote_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&variant=undefined), *The New York Times*, (June 26, 2022)

- Justice Samuel Alito's claim, that there is no enumeration and original meaning in the Constitution related to involuntary sexual subordination and reproduction, misreads and misunderstands American slavery, the social conditions of that enterprise and legal history. It misinterprets

how slavery was abolished, ignores the deliberation and debates within Congress, and craftily renders Black women and their bondage invisible.

  - Michelle Goodwin, “No, Justice Alito, Reproductive Justice Is in the Constitution” (https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/26/opinion/justice-alito-reproductive-justice-constitution-abortion.html?name=styln-op-abortion&region=MAIN_CONTENT_3&block=storyline_opinion_quote_recirc&action=click&pgtype=Article&variant=undefined), *The New York Times*, (June 26, 2022)

- As soon as slavery fired upon the flag it was felt, we all felt, even those who did not object to slaves, that slavery must be destroyed. **We felt that it was a stain to the Union that men should be bought and sold like cattle.**

  - Ulysses S. Grant, to Otto von Bismarck (June 1878), as quoted in *Around the World with General Grant* (http://www.granthomepage.com/grantslavery.htm) (1879), by John Russell Young, The American News Company, New York, vol. 7, p. 416

- For the present, and so long as there are living witnesses of the great war of sections, **there will be people who will not be consoled for the loss of a cause which they believed to be holy. As time passes, people, even of the South, will begin to wonder how it was possible that their ancestors ever fought for or justified institutions which acknowledged the right of property in man**.

  - Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of General U. S. Grant* (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4367) (1885), by U.S. Grant, Ch. 12.

- I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse.

  - Ulysses S. Grant, as quoted in *Personal Memoirs of General U. S. Grant* (http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4367) (1885), Ch. 67.

- The Union cause has suffered, and is now suffering immensely, from mistaken deference to rebel slavery. Had you, sir, in your inaugural address, unmistakably given notice that, in case the rebellion already commenced were persisted in, and your efforts to preserve the Union and enforce the laws should be resisted by armed force, you would recognize no loyal person as rightfully held in Slavery by a traitor, we believe the rebellion would therein have received a staggering if not fatal blow... **We must have scouts, guides, spies, cooks, teamsters, diggers and choppers from the blacks of the south, whether we allow them to fight for us or not, or we shall be baffled and repelled**. As one of the millions who would gladly have avoided this struggle at any sacrifice but that principle and honor, but who now feel that **the triumph of the Union is dispensable not only to the existence of our country to the well being of mankind**, I entreat you to render a hearty and unequivocal obedience to the law of the land.

  - Horace Greeley, letter to Abraham Lincoln (https://web.archive.org/web/20051227061528/http://www.civilwarhome.com/lincolngreeley.htm) (19 August 1862)

H

- Just yesterday in the state of Florida, they decided middle school students will be taught that enslaved people benefited from slavery. They insult us in an attempt to gaslight us, and we will not stand for it.

  - Kamala Harris speech at Delta Sigma Theta conference in Indianapolis, (7/20/2023); “VP Harris will visit Florida to speak out against state's new Black history standards” (https://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/vp-harris-will-visit-florida-to-speak-out-against-state-s-new-black-history-standards-188969029764), "Morning Joe", *MSNBC*, (July 21, 2023)

- Adults know what slavery really involved. It involved rape. It involved torture. It involved taking a baby from their mother. It involved some of the worst examples of depriving people of humanity in our world. It involved subjecting [people to] the requirement that they would think of themselves and be thought of as less than human.
  So in the context of that, how is it that anyone could suggest that in the midst of these atrocities, that there was any benefit to being subjected to this level of dehumanization?
  - Kamala Harris, "Remarks by Vice President Harris on the Florida State Board of Education Curriculum Updates" (https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2023/07/21/remarks-by-vice-president-harris-on-the-florida-state-board-of-education-curriculum-updates/), Ritz Theatre and Museum Jacksonville, Florida, (July 21, 2023)

J

- Kemp declared that the Republican Party is the party of Lincoln. But just what is the connection between the Republican Party of 1860 and that of 1996? The essence of slavery, Lincoln said, was expressed in the proposition: "You work; I'll eat." Upon his election as president, he was besieged by office seekers who drove him to distraction. Lincoln was blunt in his judgment of the great majority of them. They wanted to eat without working. Lincoln saw the demand for the protection of slavery and the demand for government sinecures to be at bottom one and the same. **The origin of all constitutional rights, according to Lincoln, was the right that a man had to own himself, and therefore to own the product of his own labor. Government exists to protect that right, and to regulate property only to make it more valuable to its possessors**.
  - Harry V. Jaffa, "The Party of Lincoln vs. The Party of Bureaucrats" (https://web.archive.org/web/20070205052750/http://claremont.org/publications/pubid.485/pub_detail.asp) (13 September 1996), *Writings*, The Claremont Institute

That men should pray and fight for their own freedom, and yet keep others in slavery, is certainly acting a very inconsistent, as well as unjust and, perhaps, impious part. ~ John Jay

- Slaves, though held by the laws of men, are free by the laws of God.
  - John Jay, as quoted in "The Present Aspect of the Slavery Question" (https://books.google.com/books?id=y3RaAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA69&dq=%22We+intend+this+Constitution+to+be+the+great+charter+of+human+liberty+to+the+unborn+%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CB0Q6AEwAGoVChMI2ai6jcCsxwIVRRs-Ch38_wz2#v=onepage&q=%22We%20intend%20this%20Constitution%20to%20be%20the%20great%20charter%20of%20human%20liberty%20to%20the%20unborn%20%22&f=false) (18 October 1859), by George William Curtis, *Orations and Addresses of George William Curtis*.
- **That men should pray and fight for their own freedom**, **and yet keep others in slavery**, **is certainly acting a very inconsistent**, **as well as unjust and**, **perhaps**, **impious part**, but the history of mankind is filled with instances of human improprieties.
  - John Jay, Letter to Reverend Doctor Price (27 September 1785) (https://books.google.com/books?id=dkssAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA174&dq=%22That+men+should+pray+and+fight+for+their%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCkQ6AEwAmoVChMI75Wyh9_RxwIVjBk-Ch2XYgdH#v=onepage&q=%22That%20men%20should%20pray%20and%20fight%20for%20their%22&f=false)
- Prior to the late revolution, the great majority, or rather the great body of our people had been so long accustomed to the practice and convenience of having slaves, that very few among them even doubted the propriety and rectitude of it. Some liberal and conscientious men had indeed, by their conduct and writings, drawn the lawfulness of slavery into question, and they made converts to that opinion.... **It gives us**

pleasure to inform you, that a disposition favorable to our views and wishes prevails more and more, and that it has already had an influence on our laws.

  - John Jay, Letter to the President of the English Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves (https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Life_of_John_Jay/S_c5AAAAcAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&pg=PA233) (June 1788).

- For the most trifling reasons, and sometimes for no conceivable reason at all, his majesty has rejected laws of the most salutary tendency. **The abolition of domestic slavery is the great object of desire in those colonies where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state.** But previous to the infranchisement of the slaves we have, it is necessary to exclude all further importations from Africa. Yet our repeated attempts to effect this by prohibitions, and by imposing duties which might amount to a prohibition, have been hitherto defeated by his majesty's negative: thus preferring the immediate advantages of a few British corsairs to the lasting interests of the American states, and to the rights of human nature deeply wounded by this infamous practice.

  - Thomas Jefferson, *A Summary View of the Rights of British America* (http://alexpeak.com/twr/jefferson/#1784) (July 1774).

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- I congratulate you, my dear friend, on the law of your state for suspending the importation of slaves, and for the glory you have justly acquired by endeavoring to prevent it forever. **This abomination must have an end, and there is a superior bench reserved in heaven for those who hasten it.**

  - Thomas Jefferson, as quoted in letter to Edward Rutledge (http://alexpeak.com/twr/jefferson/#1784) (14 July 1787).

- What many people don't know, and I point this out in my essay, is that one of the reasons we even decide to become a nation in the first place is over the issue of slavery and had we not had slavery we might be Canada. That one of the reasons that the founders wanted to break off from Britain is they were afraid that Britain was going to begin regulating slavery and maybe even moving towards abolishment. And we were making so much money off of slavery that the founders wanted to be able to continue it.

  - Nikole Hannah-Jones, "The 1619 Project details the legacy of slavery in America" (https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-1619-project-details-the-legacy-of-slavery-in-america), *PBS News Hour*, (Aug 18, 2019).

- It's not incidental that 10 of the first 12 presidents of the United States were slaveowners. This is where, at that time, this kind of very burgeoning nation was getting so much of its wealth and its power. It's what allows this kind of ragged group of colonists to believe that they could defeat the most powerful empire in the world at that time. And it went everywhere. It was north and south. We talk about the industrial revolution — where do Americans believe that the cotton that was being spun in those textile mills was coming from, was coming from enslaved people who are growing that cotton in the south. The rum industry, which was really the currency of the slave trade, that rum was being processed and sold in the United States. The banking industry that rises in New York City is rising largely to provide the mortgages and insurance policies and to finance the slave trade. The shipbuilders are northern shipbuilders. The people who are sending voyages to Africa to bring enslaved people here are all in the north. So this is a truly national enterprise but we prefer to think that it was just some backward Southerners, because that is the way that we can kind of deal with our fundamental paradox that at our beginning that we were a nation built on both the inalienable rights of man and also a nation built on bondage.

- Nikole Hannah-Jones, “The 1619 Project details the legacy of slavery in America” (https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-1619-project-details-the-legacy-of-slavery-in-america), *PBS News Hour*, (Aug 18, 2019).

- After NBC News reached out to the DeSantis administration for comment, a Department of Education spokesperson replied with a defensive statement from two members of Florida’s African American History Standards Workgroup, who claimed that “some slaves developed highly specialized trades from which they benefitted,” including enslaved people who became blacksmiths, shoemakers and tailors.
  But this framing is dangerous. It invites teachers to portray enslaved people as barbarians or simpletons who had the good fortune of learning “specialized trades” despite their captivity and all of its harms — the rape, the torture, the medical experimentation.
  In reality, the suggestion that specialized skills were the fruit of the American slave system is undercut by the fact that many Black people already had been practicing such trades, largely outside the context of American chattel slavery. And while Florida teachers will be required to teach that learning these things was for enslaved people’s benefit, the primary benefit was for the white racists who held them in bondage.
  Slavery was about objectification. It wasn’t a summer internship.

  - Jahan Jones, “In a fiery speech, Harris slams Florida’s new teaching guidelines” (https://www.msnbc.com/the-reidout/reidout-blog/kamala-harris-speech-florida-slavery-teaching-standards-rcna95596), *MSNBC*, (July 21, 2023)

I congratulate you, my dear friend, on the law of your state for suspending the importation of slaves, and for the glory you have justly acquired by endeavoring to prevent it forever. This abomination must have an end, and there is a superior bench reserved in heaven for those who hasten it. ~ Thomas Jefferson

K

- Who cares if it's legal? I don't care if it's legal. Slavery was legal once too, and not just in America, but just about every other country in the world. The powerful have always legalized their subjugation of the less powerful.

  - John Kass, "Evil with salad and a nice red" (http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/kass/ct-kass-planned-parenthood-met-0719-20150719-column.html) (19 July 2015), *Chicago Tribune*, Illinois.

Andrew Koppelman

Andrew Koppelman, "Forced Labor: A Thirteenth Amendment Defense of Abortion" (https://web.archive.org/web/20090225130324/http:/www.law1.northwestern.edu/faculty/fulltime/koppelman/forcedlabor.pdf), *Northwestern Law Review*, Vol. 84 (1990).

- The idea of self-ownership is inextricably linked with our society’s ideals of individual worth and dignity. To give control of even part of my body to someone else is to treat me as property, as as thing rather than a person. The right not to have one’s body controlled by others is inalienable, for two reasons: first, because agreements to abandon one’s freedom are likely to be made in coercive circumstances in which consent is illusory, and second, because to enforce such agreements tends to place the state’s imprimatur on relations of caste domination and subjection.

  - p.485

- Plantation slavery obviously cannot be justified on the grouds that many people find gardening deeply satisfying[.]
    - pp. 487-488

- Bailey v. Alabama, 219 U.S. 219, 241 (1911); see also Wicks v. Southern Pac. Co., 231 F.2d 130, 138 (9th Cir.) ("The essence of slavery or involuntary servitude is that the worker must labor against his will for the benefit of another."), cert. denied, 351 U.S. 946 (1956); Beltran v. Cohen, 303 F Supp. 889, 893 (N.D. Cal. 1969) (identical language citing Wicks). A similar view was expressed by an antebellum Southern court: "With slavery . . . pt[he end is the profit of the master, his security and the public safety; the subject, one doomed in his own person, and his posterity . . . . "to toil that another may reap the fruits." State v. Mann, 13 N.C. (2 Dev.) 263, 266 (1829) (emphasis added).
  It must be acknowledged that, in Butler v. Petty, 240 U.S. 328, 332 (1916), the Court later adopted a considerably more slpppery definition: "the term involuntary servitude was intended to cover those forms of compulsory labor akin to African slavery which in practical operation would tend to produce like undesirable results." This sentence has been cited frequently when courts have wanted to hold that a challenged imposition did "not" constitute involuntary servitude. See, e.g., Heart of Atlanta Motel, INc. v. United States, 379 U.S. 241, 261 (1964). But precisely because this statement is conclusory, it is not inconsistent with any of the Court's more meaningful definitions which appear in the text. Furthermore, as I will argue below, Butler also contains language which implies strict limits on what can be excluded from the amendment's protection.
    - Footnote 33, p.487

- R. Mohr, Gays/Justice: A Study of Ethics, Society and Law 117 (1988). The subjection of the slave to the master, one court observed, "is the consequence only of uncontrolled authority over the body." State v. Mann, 13 N.C. (2 Dec.) 263, 266 (1829).
    - Footnote 59, p.494

- This idea of self-ownership appears to be so deeply ingrained in our society's notions of what constitutes respect for a person that it is not clear that we could abandon it without severe trauma to our ideals of individual worth and dignity. To deprive a person of control over part of his body is an assault on his integrity, for "the body is the primitive precondition and foundation for a person's being in the world at all, for his projection of himself into the world through actions and for his instilling value into things." If the body is imagined to be distinct from the person who inhabits it, so that it can be expropriated without violence to that person, then indeed "[[w]hether any coherent conception of the person remains when the distinction is so pressed is an pen question." Moreover, when such control has been exerted in the past, its object has typically been a caste of persons that the society regarded inferior and unworthy. Involuntary servitude is an insult as well as an injury. The insult is even more flagrant when an already subordinated class is singled out for such subjection . That is how slaves were treated before the Civil War. If the purpose of the amendment is to guarantee that no one is ever treated that way again, then Bailey's absolute rule of self-owner-ship makes sense.
    - pp.494-495

After NBC News reached out to the DeSantis administration for comment, a Department of Education spokesperson replied with a defensive statement from two members of Florida's African American History Standards Workgroup, who claimed that "some slaves developed highly specialized trades from which they benefitted," including enslaved people who became blacksmiths, shoemakers and tailors.
But this framing is dangerous. It invites teachers to portray enslaved people as barbarians or simpletons who had the good fortune of learning "specialized trades" despite their captivity and all of its harms — the rape, the torture, the medical experimentation.
In reality, the suggestion that specialized skills were the fruit of the American slave system is undercut by the fact that many Black people already had been practicing

- The blanket prohibition of self-enslavement contracts seems most explicable in terms of a similar rationale: the courts are unwilling to legitimate relations of mastery and slavery, even if they were voluntarily contracted. Were the state to enforce contracts such as Bailey's it would in effect be ratifying blacks' status as a servant caste. As in Shelley v. Kraemer, this social meaning would inevitably have attached to such judicial action even if the courts had justified their decrees in terms of neutral enforcement of private agreements. The spectacle of courts ordering blacks to stay in the fields, perhaps even returning runaways to their masters, would have given a powerful aura of legitimacy to whites' continuing efforts to confine blacks to slavery in all but name.
    - pp.499-500

such trades, largely outside the context of American chattel slavery. And while Florida teachers will be required to teach that learning these things was for enslaved people's benefit, the primary benefit was for the white racists who held them in bondage.
Slavery was about objectification. It wasn't a summer internship. ~ Jahan Jones

- In sum, there is no question that Bailey was rightly decided. The double bind is present only to the extent that the inalienabilty rule blocks desired contracts. Because there was so much coercion in the postbellum South, the prophylactic rationale applied with full fore. But so did the symbolic rationale, because of the "pattern" of the coercion. The spectacle of a black selling himself into slavery may injure all blacks, but not as much as the spectacle of blacks being compelled to do work they never agreed to do. Such a spectacle legitimates the view that the blacks' consent or lack thereof is inconsequential, because this kind of labor is suitable for them regardless of whether it is forced or willing.
    - p.503

- While the compulsion imposed by laws against abortion thus parallels the facts of Bailey in many ways, the thirteenth amendment case against these laws rests on more than an analogy. Thus far, in considering what "servitude" means, we have only compared forced childbearing with long days of hard work in the cotton fields. But mandatory motherhood and loss of control over one's reproductive capacities were partially "constitutive" of slavery for most black women of childbearing age, whose principal utility to the slaveholding class lay in their ability to reproduce the labor force. Unlike (unmarried) white women, they had no right even in theory to avoid pregnancy through abstinence; they were often raped with impunity, by their masters and others. Emancipation was intended to free them from such indignities.
    - pp.508-509

- [E]mancipation dissolved the traditional obligations of master to slave as well as vice versa. "In hundreds of cases, planters evicted from their plantations those blacks too old or infirm to labor, and transformed 'rights' enjoyed by slaves-clothing, housing, access to garden plots-into commodities for which payment was due" E. Foner supra note 73, at 131.
    - Footnote 122, p.508

- [T]he right to be free from involuntary servitude is "sometimes" powerful enough to overcome the interest in preserving human life. Consider the amendment's effect on pre-existing law. United States v. Amistad provides the relevant precedent. In 1839, an American navy ship seized the Spanish schooner Amistad near Long Island. It was under the control of fifty-nine Africans, who, during a slave-trading voyage between two Cuban ports, had risen, killed the captain, and taken command of the ship. Since then they had been trying to find their way back to Africa. Conflicting claims were filed by Americans for salvage; by the Spanish owners of the ship for its cargo, including the Africans; by the United States government on behalf of the Spanish government pursuant to treaty, supporting the owners' claim; and by the Africans themselves, claiming their freedom. The district court freed the Africans, holding that their enslavement had been illegal under Spanish law, which had abolished the African slave trade. Therefore, the American treaty with Spain, which provided that merchandise rescued from the hands of pirates or robbers should be restored to the owners under the laws of the treating countries, did not apply. Finally, the court ruled that mutiny by one wrongfully enslaved did not constitute a crime under American law.
On appeal to the Supreme Court, the majority opinion of Justice Story "largely upheld and followed the reasoning of the district court." Because neither Spanish law nor the treaty authorized the enslavement, Story wrote, "[t]he conflict of rights between the parties under such

circumstances, becomes positive and inevitable, and must be decided upon the eternal principles of justice and international law." Because the Africans "were kidnapped and illegally carried to Cuba, and illegally detained and restrained on board the Amistad," their actions could not be condemned by the Court. "We may lament the dreadful acts, by which they asserted their liberty, and took possession of the Amistad, and endeavored to regain their native country; but they cannot be deemed pirates or robbers in the sense of the law of nations . . . ."

  - pp.511-512

- As Robert Cover has observed, the Amistad decision gave only a qualified victory to the abolitionists who had provided the Africans' legal counsel, since the court recognized slaves' right of violent resistance only where the slavery was not sanctioned by positive law. Thus
  the principle was virtually confined to the facts of the Amistad-where the illegal slavetrade was involved. The right of revolution, which in classical eighteenth-century terms depended on the law's inadequacy-upon the failure of that consideration that society affords man in return for his consent and acquiescence to be governed-is turned on its head. The attempt tog et a legal declaration of the right of revolution ends with a declaration that the right depends on legality. The more unjust the positive law of the state, the greater the extent to which is legalizes slavery and approves it, the more certain it is that the right to revolution will not be recognized by international law. The right of revolution becomes nothing more thana remedy of self-held authorized where the confinement is illegal.
  However, these conservative implications rested on the fact that "nineteenth-century American slavery was marked almost throughout by the stamp of legality." Since the adoption of the thirteenth mendment, this is, of course, no longer the case. It follows that now the Amistad principle is not confined in any way. The United States itself is in effect an Amistad, where involuntary servitude is defined the support of positive law and rebellion against such servitude, even if it must involve the taking of life, is only the assertion of a legal right.

  - pp.512-513

- The Court did not cite any authority for this proposition, but an excerpt from a speech made by (later Chief Justice) John Marshall in the House of Representatives, which had been quoted by counsel, seems plainly relevant. The occasion for Marshall's speech was a Jeffersonian resolution condemning President John Adams for extraditing a certain Thomas Nash, who had committed a murder while he was a seaman on board a British ship. Nash had made his case a political issue by falsely claiming to be an impressed American who had mutinied to regain his freedom. By the time of the Congressional debate, it had become apparent that that claim could not be substantiated, and most of Marshall's speech was devoted to showing that Adams had properly exercised his authority. In concluding, however, Marshall said a few words about the hypothetical case:
  Had Thomas Nash been an impressed American, the homicide on board the Hermoine, would, most certainly, not have been murder. The act of impressing an American is an act of lawless violence. The confinement on board a vessel is a continuation of that violence, and in additional outrage. Death committed within the United States, in resisting such violence, would not have been murder.
  Id. at 558-59 (argument of defendants in error) quoting Bee's Rep. 290 (1810), in which the speech was reprinted). The quotation appears in its original context in "Speech, March 7, 1800," in 4 The Papers of John Marshall. 109 (C. Cullen ed. 1984). See id. at 35036 (editorial note recounting history of controversy); J. Roche, John Marshall: Major Opinions and Other Writings 49-50 (1967) (same).

On appeal to the Supreme Court, the majority opinion of Justice Story "largely upheld and followed the reasoning of the district court." Because neither Spanish law nor the treaty authorized the enslavement, Story wrote, "[t]he conflict of rights between the parties under such circumstances, becomes positive and inevitable, and must be decided upon the eternal principles of justice and international law." Because the Africans "were kidnapped and illegally carried to Cuba, and illegally detained and restrained on board the Amistad," their actions could not be condemned by the Court. "We may lament the dreadful acts, by which they asserted their liberty, and took possession of the Amistad, and endeavored to regain their native country; but they cannot be deemed pirates or robbers in the sense of the law of nations . . . ."

- 40 U.S. (15 Pet.) 518 (1841); at 593-94; footnote 142, p.512

- If the Amistad case is still good law, then the argument that the interest in preserving human life always trumps the interest in liberty is false. While the decision is based on the common law rather than the Constitution, it establishes that revolution is one of the rights of a free man, while the absence of that right is, at least, one of the badges and incidents of slavery. This conclusion is supported by the Consititution's text: the fourteenth amendment says only that no "state" shall deprive any person of life without due process of law, while the thirteenth is much stronger, saying that involuntary servitude may not "exist." Of course, the *Amistad* facts are different from those of the abortion situation, because even if the woman has been wrongfully deprived of her liberty (e.g., by rape), the fetus (unlike the Amistad's captain) is not guilty of any wrongdoing. What if the trade off is between the continuation of involuntary servitude and the taking of "innocent" life?
  Here the case law is silent, and we have only our moral intuitions to fall back upon.

  - p.513

- In recent dictum, the Court construed Robertson to say that "the Thirteenth Amendment was not intended to apply to 'exceptional' cases well established in the common law at the time of the Thirteenth Amendment . . . ." United States v. Kozminski, 487 U.S. 931, 944 (1988). But this interpretation of the amendment must be mistaken, since it would exempt black slavery itself from the scope of the amendment. Slavery was "well established in the common law" of some states when the amendment was enacted. See M. Tushnet, The American Law of Slavery, 1810-1860: Consideration of Humanity and Interest 90-121 (1981) (describing development of common law of slave crimes in South Carolina); see also Calhoun v. Calhoun, 2 S.C. 283, 306-07 (1870) ("For upwards of two centuries slavery existed in South Carolina, owing its existence to no statutory provisions . . . . It existed as a common law institution . . . . Although . . . not recognized by the common law of England, . . . it lawfully prevailed in her American colonies."). This suggests that Harlan was right to argue that the reliance on established usage was misplaced, since "the clear reading of a constitutional provision relating to the liberty of man [was] departed from in deference to what is called usage which has existed, for the most part, under monarchical and despotic governments." Robertson, 165 U.S. at 302. In any case,if Robertson is read in this way, it loses much of its utility as a shield for abortion laws, since early abortion (i.e., abortion before "quickening") was never a crime at common law and only became o through statute. See K. Luker, supra note 118, at 14-15; J. Mohr, Abortion in Amerrica: The Origins and Evolution of National Policy, 1800-1900 at 4 (1978).

  - Footnote 197, pp.525-526

- Daniel Novak observes that even when it was handed down, Harlan's dissent "seemed to carry more weight than the majority opinion, for within a year the law was amended to apply only to desertion in foreign ports. D. Novak, supra note 73, at 55. Arrest and imprisonment of deserting seamen was finally abolished by the La Follette Deserting Seamen Act of 1915. Howard Devon Hamilton, supra note 27, at 143. Harlan wrote the opinion in Jacobson which stressed the public-private distinction he had insisted upon in his Robertson dissent, and he probably assigned the opinion in Bailey. See Schmidt, supra note 48, at 863-64. He also authored Arthur v. Oakes, 63 F. 310 (7th Cir, 1894), quoted uspra note 52, which has been called "a landmark case upon the involuntary servitude basis of equity's refusal to require individual persons to continue giving their services under a contract of service." 111 1 S. Williston, Contracts p. 1423 at 783 (3d ed. W. Jaeger 1968).302 However, I have found no case which has cited it as controlling, either. See also Elman v. Moller, 1 1 F.2d 55, 57 (4th Cir.), cert. denied, 271 U.S. 675 (1926) (awarding a seaman damages for his detention, and holding that seamen "could not, in our day and generation, be held in involuntary servitude;" Robertson not cited).

  - Footnote 202, p.526

- Clyatt v. United States, 197 U.S. 207, 216 (1905) This principle has not been weakened by the Court's most recent peonage case, United States v. Kozminski, 487 U.S. 931 (1988), despite some language therein which may seem to suggest the contrary. In Kozminski, the defendants were convicted of violating the anti-peonage statute by holding two retarded farm workers in involuntary servitude. The government had argued that the victims had been coerced both by threats of physical violence and institutionalization and by psychological manipulation

which "brainwash[ed]" them into serving the defendants. Id. at 936. The Court of Appeals for the Sixth circuit reversed and remanded, and the Supreem Court affirmed the Court of Appeals.

Because the statute's prohibition of "involuntary servitude" used the words of the thirteenth amendment, the Court, per Justice O'Connor, concluded that "Congress intended the phrase to have the same meaning in both places." Id. at 945. That meaning was a restrictive one: "the term 'involuntary servitude' necessarily means a condition of servitude in which the victim is forced to work for the defendant by the use of threat of physical restraint or physical inury, or by the use of threat of coercion through law or the legal process." Id. at 952.

Although in the present context this language seems to imply that the thirteenth amendment reaches no farther than cases in which the woman must carry the child "or be subject to legal sanction," id. at 9443, other language in the opinion "adopts an expansive bur rather obscure understanding of what 'physical' coercion encompasses," id. at 957 n.4 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment). This obscurity appears to be the result of the Court's effort to reconcile its interpretation of "involuntary servitude" with the legislative history of the statute. One fo the precursors of the modern anti-peonage statute (in which several statues were consolidated as part of the 1948 revision of the federal criminal code) was the Padrone statue of 1874, a response to the practice of taking Italian boys to the United States and putting them to work as street musicians or beggars.

Our conclusion that Congress believed these terms to be limited to situations involving physical or legal coercion is confirmed when we examine the actual physical conditions facing the victims of the padrone system. These young children were literally stranded in large, hostile cities in a foreign country. They were given no education or other assistance toward self-sufficiency. Without such assistance, without family, and without other sources of support, these children had no actual means of escaping the padrones' service; they had no choice but to work for their masters or risk physical harm. The padrones took advantage of the special vulnerabilities of their victims, placing them in situations where they were physically unable to leave.

Id. at 47-48 (opinion of the Court) As Justice Brennan observes, "the coercion involved, as the Court describes it, was obviously psychological, social and economic in nature . . . . [L]abeling such coercion 'physical' is at best strained and (other than making the legislative history fit eh Court's statutory interpretation) accomplishes little but the elimination of whatever certainty the 'physical; or legal coercion' test would otherwise provide." Id. at 958 n.5 (Brennan, J., concurring in the judgment).

[I]t is at best obscure under the Court's test what line divides the forms of coercion that are covered . . . from those that are not because the Court never defines its rather unique understanding of "physical" coercion. Instead, the Court seems to use "physical" as no more than a formal label it applies to those forms of coercion it deems sufficiently egregious to criminalize.

Id. at 964 n.12. O'Connor specifically attacks Brennan's competing construction of the statute, id. at 950-51, but does not attempt to rebut his characterization of her analysis.

If one holds the Court to its illustration, the aspects of the Italian children's predicament which the Court emphasized are also present in the case of women who, through indirect government action, are unable to obtain abortions. Statutes effectively restricting access to abortion, too, "[take] advantage of the special vulnerabilities of their victims." If abortion are placed out of women's reach, they, too, have "no actual means of escaping the . . . service;" they too are "in situations where tey pare[physically unable to leave." It appears that what Kozminski really accomplishes is to exclude from the thirteenth amendment's scope "psychological coercion," id. at 944, 949, such as the action of "a religious leader who obtains personal services by means of religious indoctrination." Id. at 949 (citing Brief of Amicus International Society for Krishna Consciousness of California, Inc.) such psychological coercion is beyond the scope of this essay, which is solely concerned with"the actual physical conditions facing the victims of" abortion regulations.

Vieira observes that dicta in "Kozminski" may undercut the thirteenth amendment defense of abortion. In his concurring opinion, Brennan noted that the law "prohibits 'involuntary servitude' rather than 'involuntary service,' " and suggested that " 'servitude' generally denotes a relation of complete domination and lack of personal liberty resembling the conditions in which slaves were held prior to the Civil War." Id. at 961. The Court said that Brennan's "formulation would be useful," id. at 950, if limited to cases involving the use or threat of physical or legal coercion. "Clearly, an endorsement of this definition of 'servitude,' if applied to the Constitution rather than only to corresponding statutory language, would portend a narrow construction of the thirteenth Amendment, and would preclude its application to anti-abortion laws." Vieira, supra note 24, at 1190. It would also preclude its application to cases like that of Bailey, who was free to go about as he liked provided that he performed his contracted labor in the Riverside Company's fields. This application of Brennan's formulation would thus effect a revolution in thirteenth amendment jurisprudence, making the amendment's scope narrower than at any time since its ratification. Brennan himself obviously had no

such intention:
Because , as a criminal statute, must be interpreted to conform with special doctrines concerning notice, vagueness, and the rule of lenity, the issue here focuses on what central evil the words “involuntary servitude” unambiguously encompass in a way that can be defined with specificity. “The interpretation of “involuntary servitude” here is thus necessarily narrower than it would be if the issue were what enforceable civil rights the Thirteenth Amendment provides of its own force” or if the issue here concerned the scope of Congress’ Thirteenth Amendment authority to pass laws for abolishing all badges or incidents of slavery or servitude.
487 US. At 961 n.8 (second emphasis added). Cf. id. at 944 (majority opinion) (amendment is being read “through the narrow window that is appropriate in construing a criminal statute); id. at 952. Whether the Court imaged that it was intimating a narrowing construction of the amendment is unclear. As Vieira observes, “the holding in “Kozminski” was directed solely to the meaning of the term ‘involuntary,’ and did note extend to any redefinition of ‘servitude.’” Vieira, supra note 24, at 1190.

  - Footnote 214, pp.528-530

- The typical pattern is this. A farmer lures laborers onto his land by promising them high wages and good accommodations. The laborers soon discover that they are being charged so much for room and board that they owe the employer more than their pay can cover, but the farmer refuses to let them leave until they pay what they “owe.” Any worker who tries to escape is hunted down with dogs and guns. Such camps were numerous in the early 1900s, when the discovery that many immigrant whites were being enslaved created a national scandal, but some have been discovered fairly recently. They involve no state action, but there is no question that Congress has the power under the thirteenth amendment to prohibit them, and this power implies a corresponding duty. Similarly, a woman who is pregnant against her will is serving another involuntarily, and is physically unable to terminate the servitude without help. If this condition violates her thirteenth amendment rights, then the state has a duty to vindicate those rights.233 This argument invites the prudential objection that the judiciary has limited institutional competence to exercise continuing supervision over social welfare programs. Even if this objection is accepted, however, the argument remains pertinent to Congress’ assessment of its constitutional obligations.

  - p.533

L

- Slavery, I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty—criticising the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*.

  - Abraham Lincoln, Speech at Peoria, Illinois (1854), Online text Speech at Peoria, Illinois, in Reply to Senator Douglas (16 October 1854) (http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3503); published in *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (1894) Vol. 2

- **When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs *another* man, that is *more* than self-government — that is despotism. If the negro is a *man*, why then my ancient faith teaches me that "all men are created equal," and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man's making a slave of another.**

  - Abraham Lincoln, Speech at Peoria, Illinois (1854), Online text Speech at Peoria, Illinois, in Reply to Senator Douglas (16 October 1854) (http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3503); published in *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (1894) Vol. 2

- Our republican robe is soiled, and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit, if not the blood, of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of 'moral right', back upon its existing legal rights, and its arguments of 'necessity'. Let us return it to the position our fathers gave it; and there let it rest in peace. Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it, the practices, and policy, which harmonize with it. **Let north and south—let all Americans—let all lovers of liberty everywhere—join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union; but we shall have so saved it, as to make, and to keep it, forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it, that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up, and call us blessed, to the latest generations.**
  - Abraham Lincoln, speech at Peoria, Illinois in reply to Stephen A. Douglas (http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3503) (16 October 1854)

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war... ~ Abraham Lincoln

- **The Republicans inculcate, with whatever of ability they can, that the negro is a man; that his bondage is cruelly wrong, and that the field of his oppression ought not to be enlarged**. The Democrats deny his manhood; deny, or dwarf to insignificance, the wrong of his bondage; so far as possible, crush all sympathy for him, and cultivate and excite hatred and disgust against him; compliment themselves as Union-savers for doing so; and call the indefinite outspreading of his bondage "a sacred right of self-government".
  - Abraham Lincoln, speech at Springfield, Illinois (https://web.archive.org/web/20020908182323/http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=52) (26 June 1857)
- If slavery is right, it ought to be extended; if not, it ought to be restricted, there is no middle ground. Wrong as we think it, we can afford to let it alone where it of necessity now exists; but we cannot afford to extend it into free territory and around our own homes. Let us stand against it!
  - Abraham Lincoln, Cooper Union address (http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/cooper.htm) (27 February 1860), New York City, New York
- The Republican principle, the unalterable principle, never to be lost sight of, is that slavery is wrong.
  - Abraham Lincoln, speech (https://diplomatdc.wordpress.com/2010/06/05/the-libertarian-attack-on-abraham-lincoln-by-gregory-hilton/) (1859)
- We think slavery is morally wrong, and a direct violation of that principle. We all think it wrong. It is clearly proved, I think, by natural theology, apart from revelation. Every man, black, white or yellow, has a mouth to be fed and two hands with which to feed it, and that bread should be allowed to go to that mouth without controversy... If the Republicans, who think slavery is wrong, get possession of the general government, we may not root out the evil at once, but may at least prevent its extension. If I find a venomous snake lying on the open praire, I seize the first stick and kill him at once. But if that snake is in bed with my children, I must be more cautious. I shall, in striking the snake, also strike the children, or arouse the reptile to bite the children. Slavery is the venomous snake in bed with the children. But if the question is whether to kill it on the prairie or put it in bed with other children, I think we'd kill it!
  - Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at Hartford" (http://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/lincoln4/1:2?rgn=div1;view=fulltext) (5 March 1860), *Evening Press*

- It is true that in the organization of the Republican party this question of Slavery was more important than any other; indeed, so much more important has it become that no other national question can even get a hearing just at present... Slavery is the question, the all absorbing topic of the day. It is true that **all of us, and by that I mean, not the Republican Party alone, but the whole American people, here and elsewhere, all of us wish this question settled**, wish it out of the way. **It stands in the way, and prevents the adjustment, and the giving of necessary attention to other questions of national house-keeping. The people of the whole nation agree that this question ought to be settled, and yet it is not settled**. And the reason is that they are not yet agreed how it shall be settled. All wish it done, but some wish one way and some another, and some a third, or fourth, or fifth; different bodies are pulling in different directions, and none of them having a decided majority, are able to accomplish the common object...
    - Abraham Lincoln, "Allow the humblest man an equal chance" (http://www.historyplace.com/lincoln/haven.htm) (6 March 1860), New Haven, Connecticut. As quoted in *Lincoln on Democracy* (http://books.google.de/books?id=8bWmmyJEMZoC&pg=PA176&lpg=PA176&dq=abraham+lincoln+While+we+do+not+propose+any+war+upon+capital,+we+do+wish+to+allow+the+humblest+man+an+equal+chance+to+get+rich+with+everybody+else.&source=bl&ots=vFissaWjnv&sig=jte7zDvn8Ia0tivqhxHAfzYZLyE&hl=de&sa=X&ei=rIahUunBJIbEtAbE5IGwAg&ved=0CDcQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=abraham%20lincoln%20While%20we%20do%20not%20propose%20any%20war%20upon%20capital%2C%20we%20do%20wish%20to%20allow%20the%20humblest%20man%20an%20equal%20chance%20to%20get%20rich%20with%20everybody%20else.&f=false), by Mario Matthew Cuomo and G.S. Boritt, pp. 176-177

Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully... Abraham Lincoln

- **Slaves are human beings. Men, not property**. That **some of the things, at least, stated about men in the Declaration of Independence apply to them as well as to us.** I say, we think, most of us, that **this charter of freedom applies to the slave as well as to ourselves**, that the class of arguments put forward to batter down that idea, are also calculated to break down the very idea of a free government, even for white men, and to undermine the very foundations of free society. **We think slavery a great moral wrong**, and while we do not claim the right to touch it where it exists, **we wish to treat it as a wrong in the territories, where our votes will reach it. We think that a respect for ourselves, a regard for future generations and for the God that made us, require that we put down this wrong where our votes will properly reach it**. We think that species of labor an injury to free white men. **In short, we think slavery a great moral, social, and political evil, tolerable only because, and so far as its actual existence makes it necessary to tolerate it, and that beyond that, it ought to be treated as a wrong**.
    - Abraham Lincoln, "Allow the humblest man an equal chance" (http://www.historyplace.com/lincoln/haven.htm) (6 March 1860), New Haven, Connecticut. As quoted in *Lincoln on Democracy* (http://books.google.de/books?id=8bWmmyJEMZoC&pg=PA176&lpg=PA176&dq=abraham+lincoln+While+we+do+not+propose+any+war+upon+capital,+we+do+wish+to+allow+the+humblest+man+an+equal+chance+to+get+rich+with+everybody+else.&source=bl&ots=vFissaWjnv&sig=jte7zDvn8Ia0tivqhxHAfzYZLyE&hl=de&sa=X&ei=rIahUunBJIbEtAbE5IGwAg&ved=0CDcQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=abraham%20lincoln%20While%20we%20do%20not%20propose%20any%20war%20upon%20capital%2C%20we%20do%20wish%20to%20allow%20the%20humblest%20man%20an%20equal%20chance%20to%20get%20rich%20with%20everybody%20else.&f=false), by Mario Matthew Cuomo and G.S. Boritt, pp. 176–177

Strange, that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces... ~ Abraham Lincoln

- Slavery is wrong.
  - Abraham Lincoln, "Allow the humblest man an equal chance" (http://www.historyplace.com/lincoln/haven.htm) speech (http://books.google.de/books?id=8bWmmyJEMZoC&pg=PA176&lpg=PA176&dq=abraham+lincoln+While+we+do+not+propose+any+war+upon+capital,+we+do+wish+to+allow+the+humblest+man+an+equal+chance+to+get+rich+with+everybody+else.&source=bl&ots=vFissaWjnv&sig=jte7zDvn8Ia0tivqhxHAfzYZLyE&hl=de&sa=X&ei=rIahUunBJIbEtAbE5IGwAg&ved=0CDcQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=abraham%20lincoln%20While%20we%20do%20not%20propose%20any%20war%20upon%20capital%2C%20we%20do%20wish%20to%20allow%20the%20humblest%20man%20an%20equal%20chance%20to%20get%20rich%20with%20everybody%20else.&f=false) (6 March 1860) at New Haven, Connecticut

Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword... ~ Abraham Lincoln

- We think slavery is wrong and ought to be restricted. That I suppose is the rub. It certainly is the only substantial difference.
  - Abraham Lincoln, as quoted in letter to Alexander H. Stephens (http://civilwarcauses.org/aleck.htm) (22 December 1860), Springfield, Illinois
- **I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If He has a place and work for me–and I think He has–I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so**. Douglas doesn't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down, **but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end; but it will come and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles aright**.
  - Abraham Lincoln, anecdote registered by novelist Josiah Gilbert Holland, in his *Life of Abraham Lincoln* (1866), Chapter XVI, p. 287. University of Nebraska Press, as something that Lincoln said in a conversation with educator Newman Bateman, in the Autumn of 1860.
- The Confederacy stands for slavery and the Union for freedom.
  - Abraham Lincoln, private conversation (https://books.google.com/books?id=cpLsLWYhMLoC&printsec=frontcover&dq=%22not+a+man+shall+be+a+slave%22+%22Mcpherson%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC0Q6AEwAzgKahUKEwjiwOnYqoLIAhUIez4KHaTnDok#v=onepage&q=slavery&f=false) (January 1862)
- One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the

believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

- Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address (March 1865), Washington, D.C.; Lincoln was alluding to Jesus' words in in Matthew 7:1 "Judge not, that ye be not judged." (KJV).

M

- Another of my wishes is to depend as little as possible on the labor of slaves.
  - James Madison, Letter to Edmund Randolph (https://books.google.com/books?id=zkRKqnxjbAoC&pg=PA199&dq=%22liberate+and+make+soldiers+at+once+of%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC4Q6AEwA2oVChMIyeyr5cPRxwIVDDU-Ch2IxQjN#v=onepage&q=%22liberate%20and%20make%20soldiers%20at%20once%20of%22&f=false) (26 July 1785).
- Where slavery exists, the republican theory becomes still more fallacious.
  - James Madison, *Vices of the Political System of the United States* (http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a4_4s2.html) (April 1787), Papers 9:350-51.
- We have seen the mere distinction of color made, in the most enlightened period of time, a ground of the most oppressive dominion ever exercised by man over man.
  - James Madison, speech at the Constitutional Convention (https://books.google.com/books?id=zkRKqnxjbAoC&pg=PA199&dq=%22liberate+and+make+soldiers+at+once+of%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC4Q6AEwA2oVChMIyeyr5cPRxwIVDDU-Ch2IxQjN#v=onepage&q=%22liberate%20and%20make%20soldiers%20at%20once%20of%22&f=false) (6 June 1787).
- Twenty years will produce all the mischief that can be apprehended from the liberty to import slaves. So long a term will be more dishonorable to the National character than to say nothing about it in the Constitution.
  - James Madison, Madison Debates (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/debates_825.asp) (25 August 1787).
- It might prove a great encouragement to manumission in the southern parts of the U.S. and even afford the best hope yet presented of putting an end to the slavery, in which not less than 600,000 unhappy Negroes are now involved...
  - James Madison, Memorandum to Abolitionists (https://books.google.com/books?id=PsFnB7FA11YC&pg=PA200&dq=%22Rendered+impossible+by+the+prejudices+of+the+whites%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCMQ6AEwAWoVChMI8uuN6dbUxwIVBD0-Ch1EqwFq#v=onepage&q=%22Rendered%20impossible%20by%20the%20prejudices%20of%20the%20whites%22&f=false) (20 October 1789), as quoted in *Selected Writings*, p. 188.
- The United States, having been the first to abolish within the extent of their authority the transportation of the natives of Africa into slavery, by prohibiting the introduction of slaves and by punishing their citizens participating in the traffic, cannot but be gratified at the progress made by concurrent efforts of other nations toward a general suppression of so great an evil.
  - James Madison, as quoted in *State of the Nation* (https://books.google.com/books?id=PsFnB7FA11YC&pg=PA200&dq=%22Rendered+impossible+by+the+prejudices+of+the+whites%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCMQ6AEwAWoVChMI8uuN6dbUxwIVBD0-Ch1EqwFq#v=onepage

&q=%22Rendered%20impossible%20by%20the%20prejudices%20of%20the%20whites%22&f=false) (3 December 1816).

- The great evil under which the nation labors.
  - James Madison, letter to Robert J. Evans (http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch15s65.html) (15 June 1819).
- I have long thought that our vacant territory was the resource which, in some mode or other, was most applicable and adequate as a gradual cure for **the portentous evil**.
  - James Madison, Letter to Tench Coxe (https://books.google.com/books?id=EgpFAQAAMAAJ&pg=PR20&dq=%22portentous+evil%22+%22Madison%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCMQ6AEwAWoVChMIzqj-_8bOxwIVBnc-Ch365g4C#v=onepage&q=%22portentous%20evil%22%20%22Madison%22&f=false) (20 March 1820), Montpelier.
- States are much at variance in the civic character giving to free persons of colour; those of most of the States, not excepting such as have abolished slavery, imposing various disqualifications, which degrade them from the rank and rights of white persons. **All these perplexities develop more and more the dreadful fruitfulness of the original sin of the African trade**.
  - James Madison, Letter to General Marquis de Lafayette (https://archive.org/stream/jstor-2713830/2713830_djvu.txt) (25 November 1820), Montpelier.
- I do not mean to discuss the question how far *slavery* and *farming* are incompatible. Our opinions agree as to the evil, moral, political, and economical, of the former.
  - James Madison, letter to F. Corbin (26 November 1820) (https://archive.org/stream/jstor-2713830/2713830_djvu.txt), as quoted in *Letters and other Writings of James Madison: 1816-1828* (http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713830?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents), III, pp. 194-195 (https://books.google.com/books?id=CDkMAAAAIAAJ&pg=PA194&lpg=PA194&dq=%22It+has+been+said+that+America+is+a+country+for+the+poor%22&source=bl&ots=IhaCmIE8FV&sig=NQAjX5Ue9GMcFLNji9FjLkXWaP8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCkQ6AEwBGoVChMIxtjzuvXYxwIVBNg-Ch2ckg_0#v=onepage&q=%22It%20has%20been%20said%20that%20America%20is%20a%20country%20for%20the%20poor%22&f=false).
- Slavery is, as you justly complain, a sad blot on our free country.
  - James Madison, letter to La Fayette (https://books.google.com/books?id=Elh0sAhIVvAC&pg=PA85&dq=%22SAD+BLOT+ON+OUR+FREE+COUNTRY%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CCkQ6AEwAmoVChMI47DWxfTQxwIVRFQ-Ch2fvwWA#v=onepage&q=%22SAD%20BLOT%20ON%20OUR%20FREE%20COUNTRY%22&f=false) (1821).
- In the late 18th and early 19th century, northern states abolished slavery, and a long border emerged within the United States, between free states and slave states. It also became clear that some Americans were strongly committed to enslaving people while others found the practice morally abhorrent. Enslaved people themselves brought the clashing views into relief as they regularly escaped bondage and fled to states where slavery was outlawed.
  In 1793, Congress passed a law intended to enforce the Constitution's fugitive slave clause, which recognized that enslavers had some power to claim enslaved people who managed to get to free states. But that law left open many questions, including how enslavers' claims would be adjudicated and the extent to which free states could establish their own procedures for such cases.
  Over time, as the abolition movement grew, northerners insisted that enslavers had no business sending agents to enforce slavery beyond the borders of their own states, and free states enacted a variety of policies to constrain enslavers' power. Known as "personal liberty laws," these included state-level provisions to protect free Black people from kidnapping, strict standards of evidence for evaluating enslavers' claims and jury trials for adjudicating those claims, rather than cursory proceedings before a single local official.

Infuriated enslavers demanded better treatment from White Americans in the free states. The governments of slave states sometimes sent delegations to free states to demand repeal of personal liberty laws. And free states vacillated in their policies, often changing course when a new political party took power in the legislature. The relative safety of Black people living in the North was in constant flux as a result.
Many looked to the federal government to resolve the conflicts and uncertainty. The U.S. Supreme Court entered the debate in the 1842 case of Prigg v. Pennsylvania. There, the court declared that enforcement of the Constitution's fugitive slave clause was a matter of exclusive federal jurisdiction, invaliding many personal liberty laws and opening the door for a much more stringent federal fugitive slave law.
But Prigg also made space for free state local officials to refuse to cooperate with enslavers, and this they certainly did. In the 1840s, many free states passed new personal liberty laws, some of which declared that state and local officials were not permitted to cooperate in the renditions of fugitive enslaved people.
As part of the broader Compromise of 1850, Congress weighed in heavily on the side of enslavers, adopting a new Fugitive Slave Act that created a cadre of federal commissioners to oversee claims to human property in the free states. The new law permitted commissioners to deputize people to help them and commanded "all good citizens" to participate when asked. The 1850 law's vast expansion of federal power in the states gave the lie to the idea that what enslavers really cared about was "states' rights." To the contrary, enslavers and their supporters advocated federal power of unprecedented reach when it served their purposes.
Hundreds and probably thousands of Black northerners fled the country rather than face capture and enslavement under the repressive new regime.
Broad-based resistance in the free states grew in the late 1850s, as states passed new personal liberty laws in defiance of the Fugitive Slave Act and local officials and citizens stood up against efforts to enforce it. They continued to do so even after the Supreme Court reinforced in Ableman v. Booth (1859) that the act was constitutional and federal authorities had exclusive jurisdiction in such matters.
Northerners' growing refusal to tolerate slavecatchers and cooperate with federal law contributed to the coming of the Civil War, and the war, in turn, resulted in the abolition of slavery. The 13th, 14th and 15th amendments, adopted after the war, were an effort to set the nation on a new constitutional footing.

  - Kate Masur, "What pre-Civil War history tells us about the coming abortion battle" (https://www.washingtonpost.com/made-by-history/2022/07/14/what-pre-civil-war-history-tells-us-about-coming-abortion-battle/), (July 14, 2022)

- If I take the wages of everyone here, individually it means nothing, but collectively all of the earning power or wages that you earned in one week would make me wealthy. And if I could collect it for a year, I'd be rich beyond dreams. Now, when you see this, and then you stop and consider the wages that were kept back from millions of Black people, not for one year but for 310 years, you'll see how this country got so rich so fast. And what made the economy as strong as it is today. And all that slave labor that was amassed in unpaid wages, is due someone today. And you're not giving us anything when we say that it's time to collect.

  - Malcolm X, "Twenty million black people in prison," in *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches*, p. 51.

- The slavery controversy in the United States presents a case of the most violent antagonism of interests and opinions. No persuaions, no entreaties or appeals, can allay the fierce contention between the two mutually repulsive elements of our system.

  - *Mississippi Free Trader* (28 August 1857).

N

In the book *The Political Lincoln: An Encyclopedia* Professors Paul Finkleman and Martin J. Hershock debunk the absurd myth that President Lincoln was somehow a 'racist' because of his measured approach to ending slavery in the rebelling south first, while waging a war to end all slavery nationwide. If the Democrats had left blacks alone at this moment in history, our nation would not be faced with racial divisiveness today.

Instead, Democrats set for themselves the horrendous task of keeping blacks in virtual slavery... The core socialist philosophy of the Democrats is to give a man a fish, so he can eat for a day. Socialism uses welfare, giving a man a fish, to keep blacks in poverty. The core enterprise philosophy of the Republicans is to teach a man how to fish so he can feed himself for a lifetime.

- - National Black Republican Association, "Civil Rights History" (http://cache.trustedpartner.com/docs/library/NationalBlackRepublicanAssociation2009/NBRA%20Civil%20Rights%20Newsletter%2018June2012.pdf) (2009), *National Black Republican Association Newsletter*

- Far from there being a consensus on the acceptance of slavery, sectional differences between the north and the south about the practice of it existed, and were subject of political contentions, from the beginning of the American nation!
  - David Navarro, "More of the Same" (https://cwcrossroads.wordpress.com/2014/08/01/more-of-the-same/#comment-47695) (12 July 2015), *Crossroads*

- There is one massive phenomenon in the history of our country that might be invoked to support Kelsen's point of view. That phenomenon is the way a very large class of human beings were treated prior to the enactment of the thirteenth and fourteenth amendments. When one looks back at the history of 200 years of slavery in the United States, and looks back at it as a lawyer observing that lawyers had a great deal to do with the classifications that made the phenomenon possible, one realizes that the law, in fact, has been used to create legal rights and legal duties in relation to human behavior that should never have been given a legal form and a legal blessing. To put it bluntly, law was the medium and lawyers were the agents responsible for turning one class of human beings into property. The result was that the property laws of the different states made it smooth and easy to transfer ownership of these human beings. The property laws resolved the questions that occurred at those critical junctions where humanity asserted itself either in the birth of a child to a slave or the death of the owner of a slave. The only question left open for argument was whether the human beings classified as property were realty or personality. In the inheritance cases the slave child was treated like the issue of an animal, compared again and again in legal decisions to the issue of livestock.
  - John T. Noonan Jr., “The Root and Branch of Roe v. Wade” (https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1945&context=nlr), *Nebraska Law Review*, Volume 63, Issue 4, Article 4, 1984, p.669

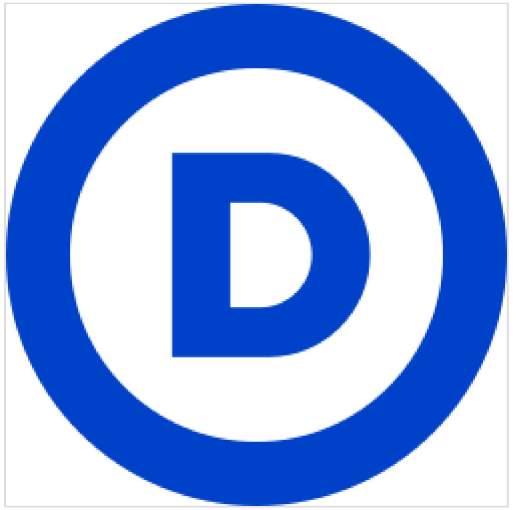
O

- In a statement, Derrick Johnson, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), said: “Today’s actions by the Florida state government are an attempt to bring our country back to a 19th-century America where Black life was not valued, nor our rights protected.
  “Our children deserve nothing less than truth, justice and the equity our ancestors shed blood, sweat and tears for.”
  The Florida Education Association, a union representing more than 150,000 educators, called the new curriculum a “disservice to Florida students” and a “big step backwards”.
  “Florida’s students deserve a world-class education that equips them to be successful adults who can heal our nation’s divisions rather than deepen them,” said Andrew Spar, the FEA president.
  - Gloria Oladipo and Maya Yang; "Kamala Harris condemns Florida over curriculum claim of slavery ‘benefit’" (https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/jul/21/kamala-harris-florida-schools-black-history-slavery), *The Guardian*, (21 Jul 2023)

P

- **To Americans, that some desperate wretches should be willing to steal and enslave men by violence and murder for gain, is rather lamentable** than strange. But that many civilized, nay, christianized people should approve, and be concerned in the savage practice, is surprising; and still persist, though it has been so often proved contrary to the light of nature, to every principle of Justice and Humanity, and even good policy, by a succession of eminent men, and several late publications.
  - Thomas Paine, *African Slavery in America* (1775).
- In America, the Democratic Party thinks slavery is 'indispensable to good government', and is 'the normal condition of one seventh part of the people'.
  - Theodore Parker, "The relation of slavery to a Republican form of government" (https://archive.org/details/ASPC0005189300) (26 May 1858), New England Anti-Slavery Convention.
- If Americans should now turn back, submit again to slavery, it would be a betrayal so base the human race might better perish.
  - Isabel Paterson, *The God of the Machine* (1943), p. 292.
- Slavery isn't a uniquely American sin, but rather one of mankind throughout the course of history.
  - Catherine M. Pavlich, as quoted in "Katie Pavlich: America Is Not Racist" (http://thehill.com/opinion/katie-pavlich/246440-katie-pavlich-america-is-not-racist) (29 June 2015), by C.M. Pavlich, *The Hill*, News Communications, Inc.
- On the issue of slavery, Democrats fought for and gave their lives to expand it while Republicans fought and gave their lives to ban it. Some called it the Civil War, others called it the 'War Between the States'. But to African Americans and President Lincoln it was the war between the Democrats and Republicans concerning the states' rights to maintain the institution of slavery.
  - Wayne Perryman, letter to Terry McAuliffe (https://web.archive.org/web/20090401203806/http://www.nationalblackrepublicans.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=pages.DYK-Democrats%20Owe%20Blacks%20an%20Apology) (5 April 2004)
- I have never been in favor of the abolition of slavery until since this war has determined me in the conviction that it is a greater sin than our Government is able to stand... It is opposed to the Spirit of the age – and in my opinion this Rebellion is but the death struggle of the overgrown monster.
  - Eli K. Pickett, U.S. sergeant, in a letter to his wife (27 March 1863).
- What a splendid cause is this on which we are engaged. I think it is the grandest that ever enlisted the sympathies of man. Nobler even than the Revolution for they fought for their own freedom while we fight for that of another race. I firmly believe that the doom of slavery is fixed and if it is not wholly rooted out by the present war, measures will be taken to wipe it out forever. If such an event can be consummated by any sacrifice of mine, it shall be cheerfully made. I could die for this as readily as I could lie down to rest at the close of a day

To Americans, that some desperate wretches should be willing to steal and enslave men by violence and murder for gain, is rather lamentable. ~ Thomas Paine



In America, the Democratic Party thinks slavery is 'indispensable to good government', and is 'the normal condition of one seventh part of the people'. ~ Theodore Parker

of wearisome toil. Men have called this age dull. They can do so no more... War is bad, heaven knows, but slavery is far worse. If the doom of slavery is not sealed by the war, I shall curse the day I entered the Army, or lifted a finger in the preservation of the Union. Of the old Union we have had enough and more than enough.

  - Walter Stone Poor, a Union soldier from Maine, letter to George Fox (https://books.google.com/books?id=ifQnAQAAMAAJ&dq=Men+have+called+this+age+dull.+They+can+do+so+no+more&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=%22Men+have+called+this+age+dull.+They+can+do+so+no+more%22) (15 May 1861), Sandy Hook, as quoted in *For Cause and Comrades* (https://books.google.com/books?id=ifQnAQAAMAAJ&dq=Men+have+called+this+age+dull.+They+can+do+so+no+more&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=%22Men+have+called+this+age+dull.+They+can+do+so+no+more%22) (1997) by James M. McPherson, p. 117

- Twenty years have passed since that event; it is almost too new in history to make a great impression, but the time will come when it will loom up as one of the greatest of man's achievements, and **the name of Abraham Lincoln — who of his own will struck the shackles from the limbs of four millions of people — will be honored thousands of years from now as man's name was never honored before.**

  - David Dixon Porter, *Incidents and Anecdotes of the Civil War* (https://archive.org/download/incidentsanecdot00port/incidentsanecdot00port.pdf) (1885), by D.D. Porter, p. 296.

- In 1854, the Whig Party collapsed and the Republican Party was born. The Republicans were the anti-slavery party. Neither party could at the time claim the mantle of truly supporting equality and civil rights, but of the two, the **Republicans were clearly the party that sought to abolish slavery**. The Democrats have no claim at all to supporting civil rights at that time. **The election of Republican abolition supporter Abraham Lincoln in 1860 was met by the southern Democrats with secession**. The Democrats started a war to divide the country in order to preserve slavery.

  - Bryan Preston, "Democrats Airbrush Pro-Slavery, Civil War and Segregation from Their History" (https://archive.is/rhYlZ#selection-733.0-733.76) (4 September 2012), *PJMedia*

R

- Resolved, That as slavery was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this Rebellion, and as it must be, always and everywhere, hostile to the principles of Republican Government, justice and the National safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the Republic; and that, while we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the Government, in its own defense, has aimed a deathblow at this gigantic evil, we are in favor, furthermore, of such an amendment to the Constitution, to be made by the people in conformity with its provisions, as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of Slavery within the limits of the jurisdiction of the United States.

  - 1864 Republican National Platform (https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1864)

- If the Negroes, numbering one-eighth of the population of these United States, would only cast their votes in the interest of the Democratic Party, all open measures against them would be immediately suspended and their rights as American citizens recognized. But as to the real results of such a state of affairs, and speaking in behalf of those with whom I am conversant, **I can only say that we love freedom more, vastly more, than slavery. Consequently, we hope to keep clear of the Democrats!** I say to the entire membership of the Democratic Party, that upon your hands rests the blood of the loyal men of the south. Disclaim it as you will; the stain is there to prove your criminality before God and the world in the day of retribution.

  - Joseph Hayne Rainey, speech (http://www.nationalblackrepublicans.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=pages.OtherNewsKilledSlavery) (1871).

- As we approach the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by the first Republican President Abraham Lincoln, we are reminded to be vigilant against human bondage in whatever form it appears. We will use the full force of the law against those who engage in modern-day forms of slavery, including the commercial sexual exploitation of children and the forced labor of men, women, and children.
  - *Republican Party Platform of 2012* (https://web.archive.org/web/20141019044325/https://cdn.gop.com/docs/2012GOPPlatform.pdf) (27 August 2012), Republican National Convention, United States of America

We love freedom more, vastly more, than slavery. Consequently, we hope to keep clear of the Democrats! ~ Joseph Hayne Rainey

- Slavery is useful for early accumulation of capital, but it is too rigid for industrial development. Slaves had to be given crude non-breakable tools which held back the capitalist development of agriculture and industry. That explains the fact that the northern portions of the U.S.A. gained far more industrial benefits from slavery than the South, which actually had slave institutions on its soil; and ultimately the stage was reached during the American Civil War when the Northern capitalists fought to end slavery within the boundaries of the U.S.A. so that the country as a whole could advance to a higher level of capitalism.
  - Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Howard University Press. 1972. p. 98. ISBN 978-0-9501546-4-0.
- The first martyr in the American national war of liberation against the British colonialists in the eighteenth century was an African descendant, Crispus Attucks; and both slave and free Africans played a key role in Washington's armies. And yet, the American Constitution sanctioned the continued enslavement of Africans. In recent times, it has become an object of concern to some liberals that the U.S.A. is capable of war crimes of the order of My Lai in Vietnam. But the fact of the matter is that the My Lais began with the enslavement of Africans and American Indians. Racism, violence, and brutality were the concomitants of the capitalist system when it extended itself abroad in the early centuries of international trade.
  - Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Howard University Press. 1972. p. 101. ISBN 978-0-9501546-4-0.
- Even though the state had slaves, the Founders proclaimed all men had equal rights.
  - Erik S. Root, *All Honor to Jefferson* (https://books.google.com/books?id=9ZFI2j99ZFkC&pg=PA90&dq=%22The+evil+commenced+when+we+were+in+our+Colonial+state%22&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CDQQ6AEwBGoVChMI7r2kuPLTxwIVxDM-Ch1KNgzw#v=onepage&q=%22The%20evil%20commenced%20when%20we%20were%20in%20our%20Colonial%20state%22&f=false), p. 90.

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- Today's soldiers, and the democratic fallen, now occupy a prominent place in a long tradition of American liberators, extending from the American Revolution to Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The Civil War was a touchstone in this legacy. Academic historians write that it was about sectionalism, or economics, or politics. These may have been its sources, but Abraham Lincoln knew what lay at its core, and stated as much in his Second Inaugural Address, before the conflict, slavery 'constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war'. **Union soldiers fought to preserve the Union, but also to end human bondage**.
  - Joseph M. Skelly, "The Democratic Fallen: Let us honor those who have defended our right to self-government with their last breaths" (https://web.archive.org/web/20070524182018/http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZjcwZTYwYmFmMGRlZTA1ZTc4ZTRkOGJkZDExMjBmNz

M=) (18 May 2007), by J.M. Skelly, *National Review Online*.

What was special about America was not that it had slavery, which existed all over the world, but that Americans were among the very few peoples who began to question the morality of holding human beings in bondage. ~ Thomas Sowell

- Over the course of decades, she has made it her mission to see that this day came. It was almost a singular mission. She has walked for miles and miles, literally and figuratively, to bring attention to Juneteenth, to make this day possible...when I think about someone like Miss Opal Lee, part of what I think about is our proximity to this period of history, right? Slavery existed for 250 years in this country, and it's only not existed for 150. And, you know, the way that I was taught about slavery, growing up, in elementary school, we were made to feel as if it was something that happened in the Jurassic age, that it was the flint stone, the dinosaurs and slavery, almost as if they all happened at the same time. But the woman who opened the National Museum of African American History and Culture alongside the Obama family in 2016 was the daughter of an enslaved person — not the granddaughter or the great-granddaughter or the great-great-granddaughter. The daughter of an enslaved person is who opened this museum of the Smithsonian in 2016. And so, clearly, for so many people, there are people who are alive today who were raised by, who knew, who were in community with, who loved people who were born into intergenerational chattel bondage. And so, this history that we tell ourselves was a long time ago wasn't, in fact, that long ago at all.
  - Clint Smith (writer), Interview (https://www.democracynow.org/2022/6/20/juneteenth_special_historian_clint_smith_on) with Democracy Now (2022)

Slavery existed all over the world. The Egyptians had slaves. The Chinese had slaves... What's uniquely American is the fighting of a great war to end it. ~ Dinesh D'Souza

- **We have dissolved the late Union chiefly because of the negro quarrel**. Now, is there any man who wished to reproduce that strife among ourselves? And yet does not he, who wished the slave trade left for the action of Congress, see that he proposed to open a Pandora's box among us and to cause our political arena again to resound with this discussion. Had we left the question unsettled, we should, in my opinion, have sown broadcast the seeds of discord and death in our Constitution. I congratulate the country that the strife has been put to rest forever, and that American slavery is to stand before the world as it is, and on its own merits. We have now placed our domestic institution, and secured its rights unmistakably, in the Constitution. **We have sought by no euphony to hide its name. We have called our negroes 'slaves',** and we have recognized and protected them as persons and our rights to them as property.
  - Robert Hardy Smith, as quoted in *An Address to the Citizens of Alabama on the Constitution and Laws of the Confederate States of America* (https://web.archive.org/web/20010503021334/http://www.openthought.org/summa/confederate.html) (1861), Mobile, p. 19. As quoted in *The Confederate Constitution of 1861: An Inquiry into American Constitutionalism* (https://web.archive.org/web/20010503021334/http://www.openthought.org/summa/confederate.html) (1991), by Marshall L. DeRosa, Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, p. 66.
- Slaves shall be deemed, taken, reputed, and adjudged to be chattels personal in the hands of their masters, and possessions to all intents and purposes whatsoever.
  - State of South Carolina, as quoted in "A Human Being Cannot Be Justly Owned" (http://www.libertarianism.org/publications/essays/human-being-cannot-be-justly-owned) (1835), by William Ellery Channing.
- America has gone further than any other society in establishing equality of rights. There is nothing distinctively American about slavery or bigotry. Slavery has existed in virtually every culture, and xenophobia, prejudice and discrimination are worldwide phenomena... No country

expended more treasure and blood to get rid of slavery than the United States. While racism remains a problem, this country has made strenuous efforts to eradicate discrimination, even to the extent of enacting policies that give legal preference in university admissions, jobs, and government contracts to members of minority groups. Such policies remain controversial, but the point is that it is extremely unlikely that a racist society would have permitted such policies in the first place. And surely African Americans like Jesse Jackson are vastly better off living in America than they would be if they were to live in, say, Ethiopia or Somalia.

  - Dinesh D'Souza, "10 things to celebrate: Why I'm an anti-anti-American" (https://web.archive.org/web/20151010163703/http://www.sfgate.com/opinion/article/10-things-to-celebrate-Why-I-m-an-2567319.php#photo-2709803) (29 June 2003), *SFGate*.

- Slavery existed all over the world. The Egyptians had slaves. The Chinese had slaves. The Africans did. American Indians had slaves long before Columbus, and tragically, slavery continues today in many countries. What's uniquely western is the abolition of slavery, and what's uniquely American is the fighting of a great war to end it.

  - Dinesh D'Souza, *America: Imagine the World Without Her* (2014).

- Did America owe something to the slaves whose labor had been stolen? ... That debt... is best discharged through memory, because the slaves are dead and their descendants... are better off as a consequence of their ancestors being hauled from Africa to America.

  - Dinesh D'Souza, *America: Imagine a World without Her* (2014), Ch. 8.

- In the early 1970s Muhammad Ali fought for the heavyweight title against George Foreman. The fight was held in the African nation of Zaire; it was insensitively called the "rumble in the jungle." Ali won the fight, and upon returning to the United States, he was asked by a reporter, "Champ, what did you think of Africa?" Ali replied, "Thank God my granddaddy got on that boat!" There is a characteristic mischievous pungency to Ali's remark, yet it also expresses a widely held sentiment. Ali recognizes that for all the horror of slavery, it was the transmission belt that brought Africans into the orbit of Western freedom. The slaves were not better off—the boat Ali refers to brought the slaves through a horrific Middle Passage to a life of painful servitude—yet their descendants today, even if they won't admit it, are better off. Ali was honest enough to admit it.

  - Dinesh D'Souza, *America: Imagine a World without Her* (2014), Ch. 8.
  - The quote that Dinesh D'Souza attributes to Muhammad Ali appears to have no valid origin, almost all other references are others referencing Dinesh D'Souza.

- What was special about America was not that it had slavery, which existed all over the world, but that Americans were among the very few peoples who began to question the morality of holding human beings in bondage. That was not yet a majority view among Americans in the 18th century, but it was not even a serious minority view.

  - Thomas Sowell, "The Scapegoat for Strife in the Black Community" (http://www.nationalreview.com/article/420807/slavery-didnt-cause-todays-black-problems-welfare-did) (7 July 2015), *National Review*

- Prior to the Civil War Southern slavery was America's most profound and vexatious social problem. More than any other problem, slavery nagged at the public conscience; offering no easy solution, it demanded statesmanship of uncommon vision, wisdom, and boldness. This institution deserves close study if only because its impact upon the whole country was so disastrous. But, in addition, such a study has a particular urgency, because American Negroes still await the full fruition of their emancipation—still strive to break what remains of the caste barriers first imposed upon them in slavery days. With the historian it is an article of faith that knowledge of the past is a key to understanding the present. In this instance I firmly believe that one must know what slavery meant to the Negro and how he reacted to it before one can comprehend his more recent tribulations.

- Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (1956), ISBN 0-679-72307-2

- There is also a second, tragic side to the story of how labor scarcity influenced governance in North America, and this too began in 1619. The same environmental conditions that pushed colonial governments to offer political rights to whites created incentives to establish a system of slavery for Africans. Whether you enjoyed political rights or were enslaved depended on the quality of what economists would call your "outside option." Apart from those who were taken involuntarily, and we will see that these cases existed, British migrants faced a choice of not coming to the New World in the first place. Africans arriving in the New World did not have this option. Once in the New World, British migrants unhappy with the conditions on offer could often manage to move elsewhere, but African slaves attempting to escape could hardly expect to meld into the general population, and we know that as early as the Elizabethan period, Africans were seen and portrayed negatively by the English. Political rights for whites and slavery for Africans derived from the same underlying environmental condition of labor scarcity. It would take three hundred and fifty years after 1619 before African Americans would durably enjoy the same voting rights as others. That African Americans did finally secure the vote points to another feature of modern democracy: precisely because it is based on the idea of broad participation, those excluded have a particularly powerful argument for demanding the vote.

  - David Stasavage, *The Decline and Rise of Democracy: A Global History from Antiquity to Today* (2020), pp. 19-20

T

- Let us, then, bestow a few thoughts upon what the 'Abolition of Slavery' means. In the first place, it means the annihilation and end of all negro labor, agricultural especially, over the whole South. It means a loss to the planters of the South of, at least, FOUR BILLION dollars, by having this labor taken from them; and a loss, in addition, of FIVE BILLION dollars more, in lands, mills, machinery, and other great interests, which will be rendered valueless by the want of slave labor to cultivate the lands, and the loss of the crops which give to those interests life and prosperity. It means, again, the turning loose upon the turning loose upon society, without the salutary restraints to which they are now accustomed, more than four millions of a very poor and ignorant population, to ramble in idleness over the country until their wants should drive most of them, first to petty thefts, and afterwards to the bolder crimes of robbery and murder... But the abolition of slavery means, further, that the negro is not only to be made free, but equal also to his former master, in political and civil rights; and , as far as it can be done, in social privileges. The planter and his family are not only to be reduced to poverty and want, by the robbery of his property, but to complete the refinement of the indignity, they are to be degraded to the level of an inferior race, be jostled by them in their paths, and intruded upon, and insulted over by rude and vulgar upstarts. Who can describe the loathsomeness of such an intercourse;—the constrained intercourse between refinement reduced to poverty, and swaggering vulgarity suddenly elevated to a position which it is not prepared for? It has hereto fore resulted in a war between the races, and the extermination of one or the other; or it has become so intolerable, that expatriation has been preferred as an evil more easily to be borne... It will be to the non-slaveholder, equally with the largest slaveholder, the obliteration of caste and the deprivation of important privileges... The color of the white man is now, in the South, a title of nobility in his relations as to the negro... In the Southern slaveholding States, where menial and degrading offices are turned over to be per formed exclusively by the Negro slave, the status and color of the black race becomes the badge of inferiority, and the poorest non-slaveholder may rejoice with the richest of his brethren of the white race, in the distinction of his color. He may be poor, it is true; but there is no point upon which he is so justly proud and sensitive as his privilege of caste; and there is nothing which he would resent with more fierce indignation than the attempt of the Abolitionist to emancipate the slaves and elevate the Negroes to an equality with himself and his family.

Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery. ~ Donald Trump

- John Townsend, *The Doom of Slavery in the Union: It's Safety Out of It* (http://civilwarcauses.org/townsend.htm) (29 October 1860), as quoted in "Why Non-Slaveholding Southeners Fought" (https://web.archive.org/web/20110321183207/http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/why-non-slaveholding.html) (25 January 2011), by Gordon Rhea, *Civil War Trust*.

[P]erfectly irreconcilable a state of slavery is to the principles of a democracy, which form the basis and foundation of our government. ~ St. George Tucker

- **Human trafficking is a form of modern slavery.** Throughout the United States and around the world, human trafficking tears apart communities, fuels criminal activity, and threatens the national security of the United States. It is estimated that millions of individuals are trafficked around the world each year — including into and within the United States. As the United States continues to lead the global fight against human trafficking, we must remain relentless in resolving to eradicate it in our cities, suburbs, rural communities, tribal lands, and on our transportation networks. Human trafficking in the United States takes many forms and can involve exploitation of both adults and children for labor and sex.
  - Donald Trump, Executive Order on Combating Human Trafficking and Online Child Exploitation in the United States (https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-combating-human-trafficking-online-child-exploitation-united-states/), 31 January 2020
- **Civil rights**, as we may remember, **are reducible to three primary heads; the right of personal security; the right of personal liberty; and the right of private property. In a state of slavery, the two last are wholly abolished, the person of the slave being at the absolute disposal of his master; and property, what he is incapable, in that state, either of acquiring, or holding, in his own use. Hence, it will appear how perfectly irreconcilable a state of slavery is to the principles of a democracy, which form the basis and foundation of our government.**
  - St. George Tucker *A Dissertation on Slavery: With a Proposal for the Gradual Abolition of it, in the State of Virginia (https://archive.org/details/dissertationonsla00tuck)* (1796)

U

- Whoever, being a citizen or resident of the United States and a member of the crew or ship's company of any foreign vessel engaged in the slave trade, or whoever, being of the crew or ship's company of any vessel owned in whole or in part, or navigated for, or in behalf of, any citizen of the United States, lands from such vessel, and on any foreign shore seizes any person with intent to make that person a slave, or decoys, or forcibly brings, carries, receives, confines, detains or transports any person as a slave on board such vessel, or, on board such vessel, offers or attempts to sell any such person as a slave, or on the high seas or anywhere on tide water, transfers or delivers to any other vessel any such person with intent to make such person a slave, or lands or delivers on shore from such vessel any person with intent to sell, or having previously sold, such person as a slave, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned...
  - U.S. Code, Title 18, Chapter 77 Peonage and Slavery (https://web.archive.org/web/20040924023323/http://uscode.house.gov/download/pls/18C77.txt)

W

- There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery.

- George Washington, letter to Robert Morris (https://web.archive.org/web/20060503040039/http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/project/volumes/confederation/essay4.html) (12 April 1786).

There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery. ~ George Washington

- Not only do I pray for it, on the score of human dignity, but I can clearly forsee that nothing but the rooting out of slavery can perpetuate the existence of our union, by consolidating it in a common bond of principle.
  - Attributed to George Washington, John Bernard, Retrospections of America, 1797–1811, p. 91 (1887). This is from Bernard's account of a conversation he had with Washington in 1798. Reported as unverified in *Respectfully Quoted: A Dictionary of Quotations* (1989).
- **All the leading Founders affirmed on many occasions that blacks are created equal to whites** and that slavery is wrong... **The whole Revolution was an antislavery movement, for the colonists. The political logic of the Revolution pointed inexorably to the eventually abolition of slavery** for the blacks as well... Americans did come to understand the meaning of their principles more fully as the Revolution proceeded. But with respect to slavery, they knew by the end of the founding era exactly what their principles meant. The more they based their arguments on the natural rights of *all* men, and not just the rights of Englishmen, the more the Americans noticed, by the same logic, that enslavement of blacks was also unjust... Slaves themselves appealed to the natural rights argument. In our time, the principles of the Revolution have been denounced as 'white' or 'Eurocentric'. It is true that a tiny minority of European philosophers, who opposed the convictions of most whites of their day, first published those principles to the world. But whoever may have discovered them, **American whites and blacks alike came to believe that the natural rights of mankind, like the laws of gravity discovered by Newton, were not some ethnocentric ideology but God's own truth**.
  - Thomas West, *Vindicating the Founders* (https://books.google.com/books?id=DjlpSl-x1gMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=vindicating+the+founders&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAGoVChMI0Jf4v8jRxwIVAXo-Ch1tYgf2#v=onepage&q&f=false) (2001), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., pp. 4–7.
- In the short term, slavery was bound to continue, with the constitution or without it. If liberty *for anyone* was to have a future in America, the indispensable first step was a stronger national government on a democratic basis. Even the anti-federalist opponents of the constitution admitted this much. Abolition would have to wait.
  - Thomas West, *Vindicating the Founders* (https://books.google.com/books?id=DjlpSl-x1gMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=vindicating+the+founders&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAGoVChMI0Jf4v8jRxwIVAXo-Ch1tYgf2#v=onepage&q&f=false) (2001), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., p. 15.
- When it became clear that slavery was not going away by itself, Americans faced a choice. They could keep their slaves and reject their founding principles. Or they could affirm their principles and limit the growth of slavery, placing it, in Lincoln's words, 'in the course of ultimate extinction'.
  - Thomas West, *Vindicating the Founders* (https://books.google.com/books?id=DjlpSl-x1gMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=vindicating+the+founders&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAGoVChMI0Jf4v8jRxwIVAXo-Ch1tYgf2#v=onepage&q&f=false) (2001), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., pp. 33–36.
- Lincoln and the Republican Party of the 1850s were able to mobilize a national majority against the expansion of slavery only because of the commitment the founders had made to the proposition that all men are created equal. The Republican opposition to slavery led to secession and civil war. After the border slave states had become committed to the war effort Lincoln took his earliest practical opportunity to announce the Emancipation Proclamation. From then on, the war for the Union became a war to abolish slavery... The founders believed that their

compromises with slavery would be corrected in the course of American history after the union was formed. Their belief turned out to be true, although the new birth of freedom proved to be less inevitable and more costly than they had anticipated. The civil war fulfilled the antislavery promise of the American founding. Lincoln was right, and today's consensus is wrong. America really was 'conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal'. Under the principles of the declaration and the law of the constitution, blacks won their liberty, became equal citizens, gained the right to vote, and eventually had their life, liberty, and property equally protected by the law. But today the founding, which made all this possible is denounced as unjust and anti-black. Surely that uncharitable verdict deserves to be reversed.

  - Thomas West, *Vindicating the Founders* (https://books.google.com/books?id=DjlpSl-x1gMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=vindicating+the+founders&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CC8Q6AEwAGoVChMI0Jf4v8jRxwIVAXo-Ch1tYgf2#v=onepage&q&f=false) (2001), Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., pp. 33–36.

- The old Union contained and attempted to restrain slavery. The new Union would fulfill the promise of liberty, the crucial step into the future that the Founders had failed to take.

  - Ronald C. White, *The Eloquent President: A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:BookSources/1400061199) (2005), New York: Random House, p. 251

See also

- American Civil War
- Confederate States of America
- Enslaved women's resistance in the United States and Caribbean
- Juneteenth
- Slavery
- Union

External links

- Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936 to 1938 (https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/)

All the leading Founders affirmed on many occasions that blacks are created equal to whites and that slavery is wrong... **The whole Revolution was an antislavery movement, for the colonists. The political logic of the Revolution pointed inexorably to the eventually abolition of slavery** for the blacks as well... Americans did come to understand the meaning of their principles more fully as the Revolution proceeded. But with respect to slavery, they knew by the end of the founding era exactly what their principles meant. The more they based their arguments on the natural rights of *all* men, and not just the rights of Englishmen, the more the Americans noticed, by the same logic, that enslavement of blacks was also unjust... Slaves themselves appealed to the natural rights argument. In our time, the principles of the Revolution have been denounced as 'white' or 'Eurocentric'. It is true that a tiny minority of European philosophers, who opposed the convictions of most whites of their day, first published those principles to the world. But whoever may have discovered them, **American whites and blacks**

alike came to believe that the natural rights of mankind, like the laws of gravity discovered by Newton, were not some ethnocentric ideology but God's own truth. ~ Thomas West

The founders believed that their compromises with slavery would be corrected in the course of American history after the union was formed. Their belief turned out to be true, although the new birth of freedom proved to be less inevitable and more costly than they had anticipated. The civil war fulfilled the antislavery promise of the American founding. Lincoln was right, and today's consensus is wrong. America really was 'conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal'. Under the principles of the declaration and the law of the constitution, blacks won their liberty, became equal citizens, gained the right to vote, and eventually had their life, liberty, and property equally protected by the law. But today the founding, which made all this possible is denounced as unjust and anti-black. Surely that uncharitable verdict deserves to be reversed. ~ Thomas West

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